

Samuel Prince.

CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE

THEORY of RELIGION:

IN THREE PARTS.

- I. Want of *Universality* in Natural and Reveal'd Religion, no just objection against either.
- II. The scheme of Divine Providence with regard to the *Time* and *Manner* of the several Dispensations of Reveal'd Religion, more especially the *Christian*.
- III. The *Progress* of Natural Religion and Science, or the continual Improvement of the *World in general*.

To which are added,

T W O D I S C O U R S E S;

The former, on the **LIFE** and **CHARACTER** of **CHRIST**; the latter, on the benefit procured by his **DEATH**, in regard to our **Mortality**.

With an APPENDIX,

Concerning the use of the word **SOUL** in Holy Scripture; and the state of the *Dead* there described.

THE SEVENTH EDITION,
CORRECTED, AND MUCH ENLARGED.

By EDMUND, LORD BISHOP of CARLISLE.

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CONSIDERATIONS ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION



THE EIGHTH EDITION
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ANSWER

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EXHIBIT 3

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following discourses were originally part of a larger plan, tending to shew that arts and sciences, natural and revealed religion, have upon the whole been progressive, from the creation of the world to the present time ; as also that they have been suited to each other, as well as to the circumstances of mankind, during each eminent period of this their progression. A theory, which, when fairly represented, might be supposed to give some satisfaction to many thoughtful persons ; who being convinced of the existence and attributes of one supreme first cause, yet are so unhappy as to entertain strong prejudices against every kind of Revelation from him : as well as to assist some serious enquirers, who are equally at a loss in their search after any settled order, in these Establishments : but yet, if they could once persuade themselves in general, that one of

of them proceeded in some uniform *ratio*, and *analogy* with the other ; and that both were in a state of *progression* ; would probably have patience to wait a while, in hopes of seeing their particular objections gradually removed in each, by the same rules.

Having formerly attempted to clear up some of the chief difficulties that occur in our conceptions of the Deity, and his Providence in a commentary, on *A. Bp. King's Essay on the Origin of Evil*, which met with a favourable reception from the public, I am induced to offer this continuation of the same design of *justifying the ways of God to man*: and from the very nature of that design, however imperfectly executed, there is some ground or hope that it may find the same regard, without any more particular apology.

P A R T I.

Want of UNIVERSALITY

I N

Natural and Revealed RELIGION,

No just Objection against either.

Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also. Rom. iii. 29.

A

Want of UNIVERSALITY IN Natural and Revealed RELIGION,

No just Objection against either.

ACTS xvii. 30.

The Times of this Ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men every where to repent.

THESE words contain a declaration of God's gracious purpose to reclaim mankind by the coming of CHRIST; and at the same time intimate the preference due to this, above any former institution.

In the foregoing verses the Apostle had been instructing the *Athenians* in the nature of the true God, and his universal providence. He shews them that there is one common father and supreme governor of the world, who has made this earth a fit habitation for the sons of men, and distributed them over the face of it; who has distinguished the seasons, and divided the nations, and fixed the bounds and periods of each,* in so very regular and wise a manner, as might lead all diligent observers of them

* See *Bryant on Ancient History*, p. 162, &c.

them to a knowledge of their author; and put them upon seeking out some proper method of expressing their devotion to him. Though here in fact, (as the Apostle intimates, ver. 27.) they were all but like men poring in the dark; their notions of the Deity imperfect and obscure; their worship equally absurd and irrational.

This their ignorance God was pleased for some time to *wink at*, (*οὐτιζεῖν*) to overlook, disregard, or, as it is in a parallel place, * *He suffered them to walk in their own ways*, to wander through the various sects of superstition and idolatry into which they had fallen: but now he *commandeth all men every where to repent*; or rather publishes, (*παραγγέλλει*) proclaims the tidings of salvation to all men upon the fair and easy terms of *repentance and reformation*; he offers a new covenant to mankind in general, from the benefits whereof none are absolutely excluded who sincerely desire them:—*Tidings*, which ought to be received by all, as they were by the first *Converts*, with joy and gratitude.

But how strangely has the face of things been altered, or rather the whole nature of them inverted since! When, through the degeneracy of mankind, the benefits of this divine institution become restrained to a few people; and these are taught to despise it, for that very reason which uses to make a benefit the more valuable, namely, because it is restrained to themselves!

* Acts xiv. 16.

If, say the present unbelievers, *God has made of one blood all nations of men, and is no respecter of persons*; if he designs this revelation for all men, as he must, if it would be of so great use and advantage to them; — Why then is it not actually communicated to all? — Why did he so long, — Why does he still — *wink at the ignorance of so many nations, and leave them without any means of coming to the knowledge of his truth?* Can a God of infinite power and wisdom be disappointed in his aim? Or will the common father of mankind confine his greatest mercies to so very few of his children? — And thus every argument of the superior excellency of our religion becomes an objection to its divine authority; and what should be a peculiar motive to a thankful acceptance of it, is made one of the chief pretences for contemning and rejecting it.

In my following discourse I shall consider that part of this objection, which relates to the *Manner* of conducting the *Christian* dispensation; the other, which more immediately affects the *Time* of its delivery, being reserved to a more full examination afterwards.

In answer therefore to this part of the foregoing difficulty, I shall endeavour to prove in the first place,

I. That a *partial communication* of Christianity can be no particular objection to its divine authority, since the religion of nature is on the same foot with it in this respect.

II. I propose to shew the wisdom and goodness of the divine conduct in the dispensation of both. And,

III. Set forth some of the benefits of complying with the terms of the gospel, and the inexcusableness of rejecting it.

I. I am to shew that a *partial communication* of Christianity can be no particular objection to its divine authority, since the religion of nature is on the same foot with it in this respect.

As the all-wise Creator of the universe has been pleased to frame different *orders* of intellectual beings, so he has made a considerable difference among those of the same order. In *mankind* the case is very evident. We cannot but observe a vast disparity between both the abilities and advantages of some, and those of others; their tempers of body, and powers of mind, and circumstances in the world; their education, opportunities, and ways of life; the station they are in, or the government they live under.

Now these are so many talents, which together constitute our portion of *reason*, and severally contribute to the forming our understanding, and improving our *nature*. As these then are so very unequally distributed; 'tis plain that our religious notions, or our *law of nature*, must be very different and unequal also. The bounds of duty will be as various as the degrees of knowledge in every man, and likewise be enlarged in proportion to his gradual improvements in the same man.

To speak therefore of one *fixt, immutable, and universal* law of nature, is framing an imaginary scheme without the least foundation in the real nature of things;

things; nay directly contrary to the present order of the whole creation: 'tis making the same rule suit beings in all circumstances; which is equally absurd, as to prescribe the same specific regimen to all constitutions.

To stile this religion of nature absolutely *perfect*, or its light *sufficient*; can only mean, that every one may be as perfect here as God intended him to be, and able to do all that his creator will require of him; or so much as is sufficient to excuse him from *wrath* and *punishment*: which is very true, but nothing to the purpose: for this kind of perfection is far from implying an universal, and unchangeable equality in the law of nature itself, or excluding greater light; since it may be very consistent with that diversity of talents abovementioned, and those different degrees of happiness and perfection, which are founded in, and naturally resulting from it.

As therefore all the gifts of nature are distributed in this unequal manner, how unreasonable is it to object against revealed religion, for its being conveyed in the very same manner! One who believes any thing of a God and his providence, will naturally suppose, that if any revelation were made to mankind, it would be made according to the same method which is observed in the government both of the natural and moral world; at least, he that allows this to be consistent with the belief of a deity in the one case, cannot surely on that very account reject the other *.

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Thus

* Chubb in his discourse on *Miracles*, p. 48, &c. endeavours to invalidate this observation, by asserting, that the two cases

Thus much may be sufficient to shew, that natural and revealed religion are upon the same foot in point of *universality*; and that the objection holds equally against both of them. And I have been the more brief on this head, as it has been so fully discussed by able writers*.

II. Let us proceed therefore in the second place, to point out the wisdom and goodness of the divine conduct in both these dispensations.

1st. Of Natural Religion; which, as we have seen, is proportionable to the different abilities and attainments of mankind; as these generally arise from their different stations and conditions; both which we shall find exquisitely adapted to the well-being of the world.

For in the first place, *society* is requisite in order to supply the conveniences, the comforts, and the necessaries of life, as well as to secure the quiet use, and safe possession of them. To preserve society, a-

re are not parallel, because the one could not have been better constituted; which he thinks cannot be made appear concerning the other. But if it be shewn that the like, or greater inconveniences would flow from any other assignable way of conveying revelation (which will be attempted in the following part of this discourse;) then we have the same reason to assert, that it could not upon the whole have been conveyed in a better way; and consequently the objection drawn from its want of Universality, will be of no more force than that from Inequality is in the common course of nature; and the two cases will still be exactly parallel. Nor can I find the least proof of the contrary in Lord Bolingbroke's declamation, (Works, Vol. iv. p. 293, &c.) except what arises from the arbitrary supposition of some few divines, and is here sufficiently obviated near the end of Part II.

* See Conybear's, Foster's, or S. Browne's *Defence of Revelation*; or Denne's Sermon on the Propagation of the Gospel; or more at large in Butler's *Analogy*, &c. p. 181, 215, &c. 8vo. or Sykes on Miracles, p. 204, &c.

mong such frail, fallible and refractory beings as constitute the bulk of mankind, there is need of government, which implies different stations and conditions; as these again call for different abilities and qualifications. All, 'tis plain, cannot be governors, nor enjoy the benefits which attend some posts of wealth and power: the many have nothing left them but to obey, to execute the will of their superiors, and undergo the drudgeries of life*.

The same holds in the body politic, as in the natural; there must be many inferior and *more feeble members*, which yet are *necessary*; *neither can the head say to the feet, I have no need of you.*

But, if all these different members of the Community had naturally the self-same sense and relish of things; if each man had originally and unchangeably the highest degree of understanding and acuteness; the greatest strength of reason, and fineness of imagination, that is to be met with in any of the species; how very incongruous must this unavoidable diversity of orders prove! How hard would be the case of them, whose lot is to fill the worst and lowest offices, and yet who find themselves as well qualified for, and as highly deserving too of the best, as those that hold them; and who likewise cannot but be as deeply

ly

* Illi ergo omnes conditi sunt ut hæc opera præstent, quibus in civitate opus est; conditus est autem vir scientia præditus sui gratia: [i. e. ob finem quem adeptus est, sc. scientiam.] atque ita simul colitur terra, et reperitur sapientia. Quam scite ergo dixit ille, quisquis fuit, *Nisi essent stulti desolaretur terra!* Maimon. *Porta Mof.* p. 41. Vid. *Eccl.* xxxviii. 32, 34. & *Holberg.* N. *Klim.* p. 133.

ly sensible of all that hardship and disappointment which arises from the want of them! The common intellect and apprehension of man would be but ill placed in an *ox* or *ass*; nor would the genius and temper of some philosophic mind be any better suited to *him that driveth them, and is occupied in all their labours.*

But this must necessarily be the state of things, if all men were by nature furnished with all those intellectual accomplishments, which adorn some few of them at present. Three parts in four of the world must be unfit for their particular circumstances, and at odds with their condition.

How inconsistent also would it be in nature to implant those various senses, appetites, and tastes in all men, which not one in a thousand would have power to gratify!—that sublime degree of reason and reflection, which could only prove its own tormentor!

Not to mention what ill influence such a scheme would have on government itself; how difficult it must be to rule, where every one has the same strength and skill; how disagreeable to obey, when all have equal abilities, and therefore (as they might reasonably imagine) an equal right to be their own directors. * In short, how much more wise and beneficial

* Si omnes ingenio pares essent, omnesque in eisdem affectus proclives, aut iisdem virtutibus ornati; non esset qui alias imperiis parere vellet, aut ei quidquam concedere, aut qui varietati ministeriorum et artium omnium generum aptus esset. Cum omnes omnia curare nequeant, singulos in Societate suo munere, in gratiam aliorum, fungi oportet; nec vilissima munera minus sunt necessaria interdum quam sublimiora. Itaque esse oportuit omnibus suum ingenium, ut quisque quod suum est ad Societatis felicitatem conferret, et quod ceteris deest sua industria suppleret. Cleric. Sil. Phiol. ad Aeschin. Socr. p. 170, 171.

neficial is the present constitution of things! where all is left in a great measure to mankind themselves, who have both the *forming* and *disposing* of each other; nay, where men are at liberty to frame their own natures, and dispositions: where they have no inconvenient or pernicious principle to lay to nature's charge*; no properly innate *notions*, or implanted *instincts*†; no really original *appetite* or *affection*, to sway or byass them; except that universal sense, and uniform desire of *happiness*, which was absolutely necessary to their preservation (a)

* See Ibbot's Boyle's Lect. 2d sett, Serm. 5. p. 143, &c. or King's Origin of Evil, Note 38, p. 189. 4th Edit.

† See Prelim. Diff to King and Rem. i. p. 75. 4th Edit.

(a) To such as are desirous of forming more precise notions on the present Subject, let it be observed, that when the first foundation of a diversity of sense and intellect is once laid in a greater or less susceptibility of pleasure or pain, by a perception of *ideas* more acute or dull, more quick or slow, and a proportioned *reflection* on them,—from hence the whole tribe of *affections*, &c. and the several degrees in each, are very apparently deducible: supposing only this, I say, which seems to lie in the *original stamina* of the body, and is so far not to be accounted for, at least by me; which therefore, and which only I should term *innate* or strictly *natural*; since every thing besides, that is comprehended under the name of *natural appetite*, &c. is so far from being such, that it is evidently posterior in the order of nature, and entirely grounded on the *ideas* which themselves arise from hence, and whose *innateness* in all senses of that word is now generally given up:—supposing then this one foundation laid by nature, a difference herein will be enough to constitute the Being more or less sensible, or rational in general; and tend to make it more or less *passionate* or *mild*, *eager* or *indolent*, &c. with regard to whatsoever it applies itself: But, can this ever actually determine it to any one peculiar sett of objects, or have any tendency towards giving what we mean by a particular *genius*, *taste*, or *temper*? That, and the principal constitution of the human mind, or its predominant qualities, seem to arise afterwards from the particular *associations* which we form ourselves, or learn of others, as these grow gradually, and even mechanically from the circumstances we are in, or from those objects that more immediately surround

By these means we have at first only such thoughts and inclinations instilled into our minds as are agreeable to, and for the most part do in fact arise from our particular place and circumstances in the world; and afterwards find room enough to refine and enlarge our faculties; to qualify ourselves for, as well as, by surround and strike us*; provided that a suitable attention and regard be paid to each as it presents itself.

For that amidst all this mechanic apparatus we have such a distinct faculty of attending, and determining the subordinate powers in consequence thereof, as is stated at large by ABp. King, I must beg leave to suppose, till all the various appearances, which seem so much to require it (of which in the following Note*) are solved on other principles; and then indeed this, will be of course excluded. I may add here, that neither are those associations themselves, from whence some very ingenious persons would deduce a total mechanism, altogether necessary; nor we so far passive under them, as to be left without a power of curbing and correcting, breaking and eradicating; as well as of contracting them at first, and afterwards confirming them: to assert this would be advancing a new doctrine of habits contrary to the general sense and language of mankind.

Well then, allowing such a degree of liberty, or active power to be joined with the other passive ingredients in our composition, as such, it must in some measure act independently on each of them, and be capable of forming new associations from its own proper acts, which will extend to all the rest, and influence them: and yet as it will also have some such connection with them all, as

* See Hartley's Observations on Man, part i. A book well worth the pains required to understand it, and which I must recommend, as exhibiting a very curious history of the human frame, and well founded in the main; tho' the ingenious author carries some points, particularly that of mechanism, farther perhaps, than either experience seems to justify, or we are at present willing to allow. Perhaps it exceeds the power of man's understanding to decide where mechanism ends, and where the liberty of indifference (the only notion of liberty that comes up to the purpose) may be supposed to commence. However, it seems clear that some share of each is to be admitted into our composition, as well towards solving several phenomena, as giving due satisfaction in the great articles of religion and morals; and that after all the attempts of the most able writers on this subject, neither principle can be wholly excluded.

by a right application of them, thus far, merit, some superior station, whenever that shall become void. How regular

as to be itself in some respect or other influenced by them reciprocally; or (which comes to the same thing) the mind will be so affected in, and through them as to influence it; which we all daily feel: [else how come these parts of our constitution to be constantly applied to with success for the determination of it? Why is pain present or in prospect used to move a man, or arguments and motives urged, if they are really matters of indifference to his choice, and have no natural effect upon it?] As this grows and gathers strength, like all our other faculties; and is equally capable of being impaired, and rectified again*:—As it is limited and subject to its laws, not perhaps wholly different, though of a kind distinct from those of the other appetites: (however, such as make it no less governable †,) and cannot go against these appetites without manifest pain and misery to the person ‡;—As it may be inclined, both by them and its own course of operation, and will become daily more and more conformed to them, by a duly regular exercise; which we likewise experience;—its operations will become as much the objects of foreknowledge; nor will it be much less easy to account for either the formation, or increase of any particular turn of mind, in any given situation, than if all were performed in us necessarily, and at once.

This plan of human nature, which derives every thing from a few clear principles, and yet makes room for that endless variety conspicuous in it, might, I am sensible, be set in a good light, and shewn to be free from some of the greatest difficulties that must clog all others. In this view, a just uniformity is, by the Deity, so far as his immediate acts reach, in all cases, and might be by us, generally, preserved among all its constituent parts; our talents suited to our capacity of using them; our sphere enlarged, as that increases; and keeping pace with our improvements; in short, each dispensation put upon a reasonable foot; and all discoveries made in due proportion to our qualifications for judging of them, and our dispositions to apply them. Whereas the contrary scheme, of bringing every thing to an original, equal, and immediate intuition; or of fixing every man to certain impulses, or instincts, independent on his station and endeavours, and intirely unimprovable by them;—this must be quite arbitrary, and in a great measure useless; and attended with all the inconsistences and inconveniences already mentioned.

Such would be the consequences of that pretended universal *equability*, in natural religion; nor is the levelling scheme, so much contended for in revelation, less absurd as will appear below.

* King. Note X. p. 360. 4th Ed.

† Ibid. c. v. § 5. sub. 4. p. 372, &c, with notes 69, p. 366, and 70, p. 378.

Ib. note N. p. 241, &c.

regular and beautiful a subordination must this soon produce! How fitly might the *whole body, thus knit together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, increase with the increase of God*, would man but enter into the same plan of exciting industry, and do what lies in his power to promote it, *viz.* entail benefits and successes on a proficiency in these endeavours,—suit every one's station to his respective merit and abilities; *i. e.* deal with each person according to what *he is*, and observe those rules which the great God of nature has established!

What emulation must this raise, joined with the utmost care and caution, when each person finds it in his power so much to improve and advance, as well as to impair and degrade his *nature*; and thereby also change his *state*! what eagerness to excel fame! what apprehension of falling below others! what encouragement for all, to make the best use of their several faculties and opportunities! This amicable contest, must certainly make more for the good of the whole, than if all had been merely passive, and absolutely fixed in any assignable degree of knowledge and perfection; or limited unalterably to any one condition. (b) Upon this plan alone could there be

place

(b) See King. *Or. E.* Note 19. p. 108, &c. and Note Y. p. 398, &c. We may add, that the supposition of any such fixed, unimprovable state of *natural* good implies, strictly speaking, no less than the subversion of all virtue or *moral* good; which is nothing but the choosing to communicate the former. [See King. *R.* i. p. 75, 76. 4th Ed.] for which communication there could be no place in such a state, nor consequently any room for any of those agreeable ideas which are founded on it.

Nor does this scheme any better consult the interest of our *intellectual*

place for hope or fear, reward or punishment, the only proper means of governing free, rational agents; and of conducting them to their supreme and truest happiness, which seems to consist in agency; and which can only this way be excited *. This therefore is the method most agreeable to wisdom and goodness, and in consequence most worthy of God †

Having thus far considered the partial distribution of the gifts of nature, and consequent diversity of *natural religion*, and offered some hints towards explaining the reasonableness and necessity thereof; I proceed to shew the same concerning *revelation*.

If a revelation were to be made at all, (and I must here take it for granted that such a thing is neither impossible nor unreasonable in itself, ‡) it must be conveyed in the method we are told it was, namely, at first communicated to some few select persons, and by them divulged, and gradually propagated to the rest of the world (c); or secondly, every particular

man

telllectual accomplishments; which, while it seems to be exalting them, is at the bottom taking away all their use and exercise: while it pretends to constitute an equality among rational agents, is really destructive of both rationality, and agency.

* See King. p. 216, 298, 311, 324, 335, 348, &c. with the following Note [e]. and *Foster's* wisdom of God in the various ranks and subordinations of human Life. Serm. viii. Vol. 2.

† See this described more at large in Bp. *Butler's Analogy*, p. 93, &c. 2d. Edit.

‡ See *Jenkin*. Vol. i. c. 1. or *Mrs. Newcome's Enquiry* into the evidence of the Christ. Rel. § 8.

(c) *Chubb* (on Miracles, p. 68, &c.) objects to this first method, that hereby it would be in the power of a few men to deprive the rest of all the benefits of this revelation.

But is not that really the case in all the other benefits of nature, and the ordinary gifts of providence? Are not most of the blessings

man must have it by immediate inspiration ; and be at all times, and in all cases, influenced and directed to it internally ; or thirdly, it must be published a-
but a sense of much difficulty gain
ligns of life communicated to us by the mediation and instrumentality of other men, who may be just and faithful in communicating them, or otherwise ? and is it not oft in the power of a single person to deprive multitudes either of life itself, or any of its comforts ; of liberty, peace, plenty, arts, improvements, &c ? and is not all this unavoidable while men are allowed the free use of their natural powers, which *Chubb* himself contends for ? Men, he says, *are not to be over-ruled* in either the publication or reception of religion ; and if so he has yet to explain how that is to be given so as not to leave it in the power and pleasure of a few, sooner or later, to restrain and suppress, to disguise and corrupt it ; and consequently to prevent thousands and millions of others from sharing in the benefits thereof, *ib.* p. 63. On a little farther consideration such writers may probably find, that on the plan of Human liberty, it must be impossible for any thing relating either to the minds, or outward circumstances of mankind, to remain in a state of perfect uniformity ; and then they may be sensible too that the same causes, which among other things that concern mankind, make their religion unavoidably continue in this partial and unequal way, will hold as strongly for its being originally given in the same way.

Chubb's second objection, That if men could be supposed to be honest and faithful in the publication of a system of revealed Religion, then there would be no occasion for such system, *ib.* seems to be worse founded than the other ; since this revelation, notwithstanding all the imperfections that attend its communication, may still be the means of conveying such superior benefits to those who do come to the knowledge of it, of making such discoveries in the nature both of God and Man, and of affording motives for men's attaining to such a degree of virtue, and true rational happiness, as all their honesty, without such helps, could never raise in the generality of them.

And whether the sole end of revelation be to bring men to a higher pitch of happiness than they could otherwise attain, or not : [*ib.* p. 49.] this author never can prove but that it may be one of its great ends ; and this end be in fact obtained, to as high a degree as is consistent with his own scheme of perfect liberty : so that, in the last place, allowing God to foresee all the consequences, and events attending such an establishment (*ib.* p. 62.) yet that the same establishment, so circumstanced, may, notwithstanding any thing this author has made out to the contrary, come from him. And indeed *Chubb* seems at length to be sensible of that famous objection against the divinity of a revelation from its

gain and again, and fresh miracles worked for the conviction of each unbeliever in every age.

In the second of these methods the inconveniences are very obvious: for First, This influence, of what kind soever it is, must either be absolutely efficacious, and irresistible, *i. e.* so strong as to subvert the natural powers of man, and take away his freedom of thinking and acting; and consequently destroy all virtue, praise, reward; *i. e.* all that is good and valuable in religion:—or else it would not be sufficient to answer the several ends proposed; nor could it certainly and effectually secure the lasting interest and salvation of mankind.

As an *illumination*, it must either be distinguishable from the present effects of reason, and the ordinary operations of the divine spirit, or not; if the former, this must be by striking us more forcibly, and working a more assured, infallible conviction in our minds; but so much as is added to that, above what may arise from the present constitution of things, just so much must be taken from the present choice, and merit of believing; and the concomitant delight and satisfac-

tion

its non-universality being so very much weakened; that he is grown weary of it, and willing to get rid of it as handsomely as he can, by pretending that he has not even *leaned to that side of the question* in all his debates upon it, and will take it unkindly to have such a thing so much as *insinuated of him*. The Author's Farewell, p. 219. note.

tion which we feel, and ought to feel, in giving our assent to truth (d.) Such evidence must either supersede

(d) See A Bp. King. Or. N. 19. p. 108, &c. 4th Ed. compared with N. 59. p. 310. Whence it appears, that though in some cases and respects the assent be unavoidable, and we merely passive in the attainment of many useful parts of knowledge; which must be attended with satisfaction in degree proportioned to the apprehension of that usefulness, and of a kind perhaps very complex, as arising from a variety of causes accidentally associated; yet neither is the kind, nor the degree of this delight so intense, and exquisite, as that which usually accompanies those points which we work out ourselves; which we properly make *our own*, by a free, fair investigation. These truths, though of no more importance in themselves, or in their consequences, than any others that are either forcibly obtruded on us, or fortuitously thrown into our way; yet are attended with a sort of self-approbation, and complacency, which both accompanies the first discovery, the transporting *eu^γnia*; and will continue after it, and bear reflection; and which makes them infinitely exceed all others in our estimation. The same thing, as it is come at in the one or other of these ways, is evidently not the same to us: which I can ascribe to nothing more than a consciousness that in the former case we have contributed somewhat to the acquisition of it, and to our own improvement by that acquisition; or an idea of *merit*, constantly associated with this kind of acquisitions; and which is perhaps the very strongest, and the most agreeable of all our *associations*.

From whence also we may collect how necessary it is to the happiness of man, that he should appear to himself to be *free*, in the exercise of the faculties of his mind, as well as the powers of his body; to be in some degree *active* in the attainment of his knowledge, as well as any other attainments; and how far this will go towards proving him to be really so, I leave to be considered. If he has any proper liberty, there will be a good reason for annexing this double pleasure to the exercise of it, both to excite him to action in cases of difficulty, and afterwards to justify him for engaging in such; and enable him to go through all the toil, and hazard that attends them. If he has none, won't it be a little hard to point out, either the rise or reasonableness of this so constant, and so general a delusion; and to account for such ideas as those of esteem, merit, reward, &c. which are entirely founded in it?

Whether

persede all action and enquiry of our own, and overbear the judgment beyond possibility of doubt, (which yet, from the manner of our acquiring and associating ideas, and forming judgments, is impossible to be conceived, without reversing the whole frame of the human mind; neither would that appear to be at all desirable, as is shewn above) it must, I say, either be inconsistent with the exercise of our other most valuable faculties, or it would come to the same thing with the present use of them; and prove alike capable of being equally neglected or opposed, corrupted or destroyed; it would produce no higher evidence than in some cases the common principles of reason have; nor could it lay any stronger obligation on us to obey its dictates.

The same will be the case with it considered as an *impulse*, or impression on the mind, inciting it to follow each determination of the judgment, and *physically* connecting thought with action; since this connection, if much altered from that which is observable in the present state, or increased to any considerable degree above that harmony which now subsists among our natural powers, would be attended with the very same consequences *.

Farther;

Whether the resolving all, with a late author, into the *deceitful feeling of liberty*, be attended with less difficulties, than those which this hypothesis is calculated to remove, must be submitted to the thoughtful reader. See *Hume on Liberty and Necessity*, *Essay on Mor. and Nat. Rel.* Part I.

* See *Hutcheson on the Passions*, p. 179, 200, &c. or *King. O. of E. N.* 28, &c.

Farther; as all this must be transacted in a man's own breast, and while it is limited as above, or he retains the least degree of liberty, is capable of being stifled there; every one might, and most probably would, soon disregard it, as much as he does now the many good thoughts, motions, and suggestions, which arise daily in his mind. Nor is there less likelihood of its being perverted to the very worst purposes, as interest, vice, or vanity might direct: — of its soon filling the world with rank *enthusiasm*, or the most wicked and absurd *impostures*; and when it is thus perverted, there seems to be no room for any remedy upon this scheme; no means are left to detect the fraud, or folly of any religious pretences whatsoever; no method for mankind to rescue themselves from perpetual error and delusion (e).

Nor,

(e) The author of *Christianity not founded on Argument*, [Doddwell] seems to adopt this second method of communicating a religion to mankind, and carries it so far as to supersede all other means, divine or human, that have ever been made use of to support it in the world. He contends for a constant and particular revelation imparted separately and supernaturally to every individual, p. 112. This he terms *inspiration*, and infused evidence, p. 58. *feeling* and *internal sense*, ib. and of a nature but little differing from that of *intuition*, p. 59. In short, it is what will dispatch the whole business of religion at once, without either *time* or *teaching*, (p. 17.) reading or reasoning, the use of our understanding, or the evidence of our senses.

'Tis hard to guess upon what plan this author would defend himself if he were pressed; but for the present he admits one general external revelation to have been made and recorded [though both, upon his principles, must have been unnecessary] and yet labours to dissuade us from examining the contents of it, and most inconsistently attempts to shew, as well from reason as this very revelation, that we ought not to employ our reason at all, either in the proof, or the interpretation of it; or in any thing else relating to the subject, p. 7, &c. A self-destructive scheme!

which

Nor, in the third place would less inconveniences attend the frequent republication of religion, and working new miracles for the conviction of each particular person that might wish for it, or be supposed

to

which were it really, as he pretends to prove, laid down by Christ and his Apostles, and in the *nature of the thing*, or from the *practice of mankind* ever so necessary, yet could not possibly be kept clear of the consequences abovementioned :—of which more hereafter.

But that this is far from being the case, may easily be shewn. That Christ and his Apostles both encourage and enjoin the exercise of reason in religious matters is plain enough from these few texts, *Matth.* xiii. 19, 23. *Mark* viii. 17, 18. *Luke* i. 4. xii. 57. *John* v. 39. *A&P* xvii. 11, 17. *Rom.* x. 17. xi. 1. 1 *Cor.* x. 15. xiv. 29. 2 *Cor.* xiii. 5. 1 *Tim.* iv. 13, 14, 15. 2 *Tim.* iii. 15. 1 *John* iv. 1. 1 *Pet.* iii. 15. Do such texts as these suppose Conviction to precede the Evidence? [p. 37.] to which add 1 *Theff.* v. 21. where St. Paul, treating of Spiritual gifts themselves, exhorts his followers to prove all things [a hopeful task! says our author, p. 76.] and *Rom.* x. 2. where the same great apostle is recommending Zeal according to knowledge; though this writer is pleased to tell us, that such zeal will scarce ever deserve the name; p. 25.

However, to give this extraordinary scheme of his a scriptural air, he lays hold on some passages of scripture-history [of which in their proper place] and draws in several detacht parts of texts about the *Spirit of God*, or such as found that way; which he applies to his point indiscriminately, whether they concern those ordinary assistances and imperceptible operations that may be expected from the Holy Ghost in every age, or are confined to his extraordinary, miraculous gifts, that were, we think, peculiar to the first publication of the gospel, and produced those wonderful effects which this writer alludes to; and which he, with some modern sectaries, seems still to claim, upon that ever weak foundation of believing strongly that he has the same, without being able to bring any of the same proofs in justification of such his belief. Though even here he ought to be reminded, that most of these very supernatural gifts were so far from exerting themselves independently on any natural attainments, that they most commonly acted in conjunction with, and were administered conformably to such; and were themselves improved by labour, diligence, and study; or impaired and quite extinguished by neglect; (See *Whithy* on a *Tim.* i. 6.) that all of them were subject to the will and reason

to want it; since these repeated publications, when grown common, would in all probability be as little minded as the constant preaching of it is at present. Such a continual series of miracles would in time be

no

of those who possessed them; and to be carefully and prudently applied to the particular exigencies of the church, and the most useful purposes of edifying: so as to constitute the whole a reasonable service. ‘God, when he makes the prophet, does not unmake the man. He leaves all his faculties in their natural state, to enable him to judge of his inspirations, whether they be of divine original or no. When he illuminates the mind with supernatural light, he does not extinguish that which is natural. If he would have us assent to the truth of any proposition, he either evidences that truth by the usual methods of natural reason, or else makes it known to be a truth which he would have us assent to, by his authority, and convinces us that it is from him, by some marks which reason cannot be mistaken in. Reason must be our last judge and guide in every thing.’ *Locke on Enthusiasm*: A chapter which I would recommend to this extraordinary writer; and when he shews us any of the same infallible marks of Inspiration, that were formerly exhibited; when he communicates some of that infused evidence which he can make appear not to have been derived from other sources, we may be obliged implicitly to follow his directions; but till then, are, I apprehend, at liberty to suppose that he himself is only following his own spirit, and has seen nothing; and that all these feelings, (if he be in earnest in pretending to them) are no more than the effects of his own warm imagination. For that the ordinary operations of the Spirit do not suggest any thing of this kind;—that they are never distinguishable from the natural workings of our own minds, much less in any respect subversive of them;—that they are perfectly consonant with the most free use of all our rational powers, which are the gift of the same author, and given to be so used by us;—and that these generally attend upon their regular exercise, and were designed rather to preserve, assist, improve, than to obstruct and supersede it; is, I think, now pretty well agreed on. See King’s *Or. of E.* N. 71. p. 376, &c. 4th Edit.

Nor can this author shew that reason, thus assisted, will be insufficient for the purposes of true religion; or make out from the nature of these two, that they ought to have no communication with each other.

His

no miracles at all ; they must lose their force, together with their surprisingness and novelty ; nor could they leave any more lively, or more lasting impressions on us, than such as may be kept up by those standing

His first allegation, that men by the exercise of their reason neither do, nor can be required to *think all alike*, will not come up to his point, as it is neither true, nor necessary. 'Tis false in many matters both of fact and reason, on which all men, that think at all, think in one way ; and he has yet to shew why the essentials of the Christian institution may not be included among such ; I mean as they lie in the Bible, and so far as our assent is there explicitly required to them, on pain of forfeiting the privileges of that institution. These essentials he will find to be very few and plain. But though he allows the whole of Christianity to be true and reasonable, yet he seems all along to beg the question, by supposing that it is of such a nature as is incapable of being made appear so to each person ; so far as he is concerned to know, either the substance of it, or its grounds. Hence all the formidable objections against reason's judging of the gospel-truths ; which yet hold equally in many other truths of consequence in common life, wherein the common people, notwithstanding, go on very well by the use of their natural faculties, be they ever so weak, or ever so strongly beset with doubts and difficulties.

His other arguments against admitting reason in religious matters, from some particular institutions, and the general practice of the world, are no better founded. That *children* are introduced into the Christian church by *Baptism* (which our author seems to argue for, and goes perhaps a little farther than he will be able to prove, when he asserts that to be the ordinance of God himself) and that they have early prepossessions in favour of Christianity, (whereof he shews the great use and necessity, and wherein we most heartily join with him;) does this render their religion the less reasonable to them, when they are capable of reasoning about it ? Or are they strictly under any other obligation, when they come to age, of taking it upon themselves, than what arises from their conviction of the reasonableness and wisdom of so doing, on their then being satisfied of its truth and divine authority ; and what they otherwise would have been under, when thus much ever should come to their knowledge ? Surely, their being made to understand the *Christian* religion in the first place, by no means hinders their giving it a fair examination afterwards ; so soon and so far as they become qualified

standing records, and visible memorials, which afford perpetual evidence to the truth of *Christianity*.

Not to mention that both of the foregoing schemes would in some measure put it out of the power even

of

for such examination. Nay, if they understand it thoroughly, they will find that it requires examination from all its professors in some degree or other; as appears sufficiently from those few texts above cited. It does indeed insist on a right *belief*, and a conformable *practice*, in all persons to whom it has been fairly proposed; And where's the wonder! Does any lawgiver proclaim those exceptions to the general obligation of his laws, which accidentally arise from the sole incapacity of the subject; and which common sense is ever willing to allow for, without the least diminution of their use and obligation? Or would it be any derogation from their excellence and authority; or any excuse for our not labouring to understand these laws, that all men did not reason right about them?

Nor does our being to apply by *prayer* for the continuing *fleish in the spirit*, shew the design of God that reason should not be at all employed on all these occasions; p. 11. any more than his *working in us both to will and do*, and our being taught to *ask* this of him, proves that we have no occasion to endeavour to *work out our own salvation*. We do not pretend that reason is itself sufficient either to discover all that may be of any benefit in religion; or engage us to observe and act up to what it is really able to discover; and therefore there is still room enough for our soliciting the grace of God, as well to strengthen and support this very faculty, as to bring others into due subjection to it; —to lead us into the truth; —to make us love and seek it; —to guard us against every deviation from it; —and enable us to resist the numberless temptations to vice, ignorance, and a criminal unbelief,

Nor, lastly, would the *difficulties* and *discouragements* which human reason is too frequently laid under by the practice of the world, (were that in truth so bad at present as this author represents) would these wholly destroy its influence in the point before us; or prove any thing more than that its province is too much invaded by all those, be they *parents*, *tutors*, or *magistrates*, who either wilfully or unwarily impose these difficulties; and who alone are answerable for giving any handle to such a plea as this author has grounded on them. If the two former constantly betray its cause, by narrowing the minds of youth, and shutting up the avenues of knowledge; if they do not teach them carefully

of God himself to bring about a reformation in religion, when it was once corrupted (as it might easily

fully the art of reasoning, and lead them to a fair, free use of reason on every subject within their sphere, and worthy of their enquiry; or if the last intrench upon its rights by interposing their authority in the grand affair of divine worship, beyond barely keeping up the established form, where it is fit to be kept up, and tolerating others:—It this were indeed the case now, as I trust it is not; this author, I conceive, should have shewn these proceedings to be warrantable in themselves, 'ere he went on in earnest to draw from them such a consequence, as that the whole subject is absolutely out of reason's jurisdiction. A consequence, which, whatever was intended by it, can only serve to revive Celsus's calumny against the Christian cause, *Mn. Celsus, adius miseras;* and recommend the no less absurd, modern maxim, that *ignorance is the mother of devotion:* it renders all that scripture, which was given by inspiration, a dead, useless letter; and represents that other candle of the Lord, human reason, as a false light and dangerous; and such as, by this writer's motto, is intrusted to be a curse upon us, rather than a blessing. This notion indeed he has kept to all along, whether seriously or otherwise he knows best; and concludes suitably enough to it with this piece of advice to his young academic, that he content himself with being as rational a Christian as his *father,* or *mother,*

p. 114.

As for the inconsistencies which this writer labours to fix upon that excellent institution the *Boylean lecture*, and those worthy persons who have with so much success accomplished its design. I need only appeal to Dr. *Ibbot*, who stands absolutely clear of his exceptions; and in particular gives us the true scripture idea of *faith* and the virtue of it. Serm. V. 2. S. xxi. The same liberal spirit breathes through all his sermons, and has as fully answered the end of its great and good founder, Mr. *Bayle*, has obviated this author's whole performance. Of which I shall only observe farther, that it seems to be in a great measure borrowed from *Bayle's* explanation concerning the *Munichians*, at the end of his *Dictionary*.

The same scheme which has been advanced by the writers above mentioned, is, after all the clearest answers given, again repeated in a letter to *Whiston*, 1750, and, as it should seem, by the same author; but in so wild and incoherent a way, that I can make nothing of it; and therefore till he shall be so ingenuous as to declare whether he proceeds upon the foot of *Arianism*, *Deism*, or *Manicheism*, it would be but lost labour to attempt any further confutation of it.

be in both of them) since thereby the strongest and fittest of all means to procure attention, awe, and reverence, which we now call supernatural interpolation, would become cheap, and ineffectual to that end; as was hinted above.

Besides, what unity or uniformity of public worship; what *deceancy and order*, could be preserved in such a state of things? If men did ever *assemble themselves together*, (the reasonableness and the necessity whereof will be apparent, so long as they are capable of having either their memories refreshed, or their affections raised by sensible objects; — so long as they have either memory or senses left) in such assemblies *every one of them would have a psalm, a doctrine, a tongue, a revelation, an interpretation*; and what could this produce but universal tumults, and confusion? This, surely is not so *reasonable* a service, nor so fit for *edification*, as the present; not so proper a method to convey and preserve a system of Divine truths in the world, as a regular settled instruction and historic faith, grounded on a standing, written ^{*} revelation, which holds these forth, together with their proofs, to every one; and offers them to the view and examination of all ages.

When some of these things are attended to, we may perhaps be convinced that either the same, or as great ^{advantage} as the *Oral Tradition*, may be seen in *Tillotson*, Vol. 2. Fol. Serm. 73. p. 549. or *Le Clerc*. Harm. 3. Diff. p. 615.

great objections would lie against any other assignable method of communicating a religion to mankind.

If then neither all men could be made equally wise and perfect,—nor religion be at once equally communicated to them all;—if the present laws of our nature so far as we are able to judge, are the best that could be;—and as such, ought to remain inviolate; and we be left to the common methods of informing ourselves, in all natural as well as supernatural truths:—it will follow, in the last place, that Christianity could not have been propagated otherwise than in fact it was and is, namely, in a gradual, progressive, partial manner.

Let it be proclaimed at first ever so far and wide, yet the reception and continuance of it must in a great measure, we see, depend upon the dispositions of mankind both natural and moral. Some previous, as well as concomitant qualifications are requisite to the due exercise, and influence of it, as well in private men, as public states and communities: so that, among a people sunk in ignorance and barbarity, in places where there is no kind of government or good order established; no regular forms of education instituted; where there is an universal want of discipline, and a dissoluteness of manners; there Christianity cannot subsist.

Miracles were indeed necessary to gain attention, and give authority to it at first; but the perpetuity of them would (as we have seen) weaken that very attention, and destroy their own authority. When therefore a religion has once been sufficiently promulgated by the deity, it must thenceforth be committed to human means; left to the conduct of that nation or society in which it is planted, and by their care be handed down to posterity: it must be preserved and propagated in a natural way, and by the ordinary course of providence; or there is no avoiding the ill consequences above-mentioned; namely, perpetual enthusiasm or imposture. As a system of divine doctrines and stated rules of life, it must be subject to the common methods of instruction; and taught as all other science is. Youth of all kinds are to be principled, and grounded in it; and some instructed in those other parts of learning, which may fit them for a due enquiry into its original evidence; for understanding the true nature, ends, and uses of it; and conveying the same knowledge down to future ages. Some particular orders of men likewise must be commissioned to explain and inculcate it; to defend its doctrines, as well as to inspect and urge the practice of its precepts.

From all which it appears, that ignorant, uncivilized, slavish, and brutish nations, are equally incapable.

capable* of receiving such an institution, as they are of all those other sciences, arts, improvements, which polish and adorn the rest of mankind, and make life a blessing.

Without some tolerable degree of learning and civility, men do not seem qualified to reap the greatest benefit of the *Christian* institution; and together with these, they generally do receive it; the same human means serving to improve their notions in religion, which help to enlarge their knowledge in all other subjects; and at the same time directing, and in a natural way, enabling them to arrive at, the most perfect dispensation of it.

One of the chief reasons commonly assigned for the fitness of the time of Christ's appearing in the world, was the extent of learning and commerce through all the then

* By being incapable of receiving it, I mean incapable of — receiving *with effect*; of retaining or applying it to any valuable purpose; for which men do not seem properly qualified, notwithstanding any natural capacity, without aid from the liberal arts and other accomplishments, in some degree. Most of the *Indians* are, I doubt not, capable of understanding the main principles of our faith at the first proposal; but scarcely qualified, I think, to make a right use, and receive the salutary effects thereof; to let it sink into the heart and form the temper, for want of some farther pains being taken to implant worthy principles of civil government and social life amongst them: without which, all endeavours to introduce the purest and most perfect system of religion seem preposterous. A sufficient proof of this may be seen in the *Complete collection of voyages, &c.* Vol. II. B. I. c. 3. § 20. p. 311, 312. Comp. Modern part of *Universal History*. B. 18. c. 5. Concerning the early plantation of Christianity among the *Tartars* and *Chinese*, see *Mosheim Hist. Tart. Ecclesiast.* p. 8, 9. &c. or *Eccles. Hist. Eng.* V. 3 c. 1.

then known parts of it †; which tended very much to open the minds of men, and qualify them to receive his institution; as well as paved the way for a more general communication of it: but as there were many at that time not able to bear it, so on the same account, neither yet are some able; nor will they be, till, *by reason of use they have their senses exercised, to discern both good and evil:* till their rational faculties be enlarged and improved; their natural genius cultivated and refined; which seems in a good measure to constitute the *finesse of time** with each of them respectively.

And

+ This is more fully explained in the following discourses. Part II. I shall only beg leave here to introduce the testimony of a candid and judicious writer, who appears to entertain right notions both of the nature of the Christian institution and of the best means for the propagation and support of it, and who has supplied us with the most valuable collection of ancient evidences of its truth. ‘Men must be rational and civilized, before they can be Christians. Knowledge has a happy tendency to enlarge the mind, and encourage generous sentiments. Hereby we may hope to deliver men from superstition, bigotry and persecution, which have been some of the greatest blemishes in the human conduct. As arts and sciences are now in a flourishing condition, in a great part of the world, we may hope it will have a kindly influence, and contribute to the advancement of Christianity, in its genuine purity and perfection.’ *Lardner’s Collection of Jewish and Heathen Testimonies.* Vol. 4. p. ult. ii. 221

* That the Chinese in particular, from whom some have thought that the strongest argument might be drawn against what is here suggested, and whose learning and liberal education have therefore been industriously cried up, are very far from deserving so great a character, see *Renaudot’s dissertation on their learning, Ancient accounts of India and China,* p. 200. *Terry’s voyage to the East-Indies,* sect. 12. and 21. *Travels of several missionaries,* p. 180, &c. *Millar’s history of the propagation of christianity,* Vol. II. p. 266, &c. *Mod. Univ. Hist.* B. 17. c. 1. sect. 4. and B. 18. c. 9. sect. 11. note P. or *Le Compte’s memoirs,* passim. I shall give

And as barbarous and savage nations are unable to hear the truth ; so vicious and immoral ones, are in like manner incapable of bringing forth the fruits thereof. If such a people did receive the true religion, they would soon drop it again, as many nations most undoubtedly have done ; at least they would lose the spirit, life, and power of it ; and then the bare name, and out-

ward give one palpable instance from the last mentioned author of an absurdity more than tolerated by them ; and that in a branch of philosophy, for which they have been often particularly celebrated. ‘ All nations have ever been astonished at *eclipses*, because they could not discover the cause of them : but one would wonder that the *Chinese*, who, as to astronomy, may claim seniority over all the world besides, have reasoned as absurdly on that point as the rest. They have fancied, That in Heaven there is a prodigious great dragon, who is a professed enemy to the sun and moon, and ready at all times to eat them up. For this reason, as soon as they perceive an eclipse, they all make a terrible rattling with drums and brass kettles, till the monster, frightened at the noise, lets go his prey. Persons of quality, who have read our books, have for these several years been undeviated : but the old customs, (especially if the sun loseth his light) are still observed at *Pekin*, which, as is usual, are both very superstitious, and very ridiculous. While the astronomers are on the towers to make their observations, the chief mandarines belonging to the *Lipou* fall on their knees, in a hall or court of the palace, looking attentively that way, and frequently bowing towards the sun, to express the pity they take of him ; or rather to the dragon to beg him not to molest the world, by depriving it of so necessary a planet.’ *Le Compte*. p. 70, Ed. 1738. comp. p. 93, &c. and lett. 8.

From their notorious ignorance of, and contempt for the rest of the world, and great aversion to any communication with it, till of very late years ; we may easily account for the slow progress of theirs, both in the knowledge of nature and revealed religion, notwithstanding their having had very considerable means of improving both in their hands for some time ; nor are they wanting in point of genius, as may be seen in the same accurate writer. Comp. *Barnardine’s account of China*, c. 9. or *Bianchini Hist. Univers.*—But this will come in more largely under the III. Part.

ward form will not be worth enquiring after : nay, perhaps it might be as well, if these were quitted too, along with the other. Christianity cannot immediately transform the minds of men, and totally change the general temper and complexion of any people ; but on the contrary, it will thereby itself undergo considerable alteration ; and its own influence, and effect, in a great measure depend thereon : *With the pure, it will be pure*, and they that are otherwise will soon *defile* it ; will either corrupt it with impious fables and absurd traditions ; or turn it into gross licentiousness, and carnal policy : as was evidently the case under the *Roman Empire*, and might be shewn to be so, still more or less, under every human empire, or establishment.

Thus did the Eastern nations, and were overwhelmed with *Mahometanism** ; and thus did a great part of *Africa*. To the like causes, in all probability, as well as the neglect and misbehaviour of its propagators and professors, (which have been here but too notorious†) it is owing that pure religion makes

* See Part II.

† Of the former, a large account may be seen in *Millar's hist. c. 8. p. 274, 284, 291, &c. and c. 9. p. 376, &c.* Add *Warburton's observation at the end of Sect. 6. p. 306, &c. of D. L. 2d Ed.* and *Kalm's Travels into North America. V. 3. p. 270.* As to the latter, we cannot but observe the great and general prejudice, which must prevail in both the *Indies* against all *Europeans*, from the injurious treatment they have often received from us ; as may be seen in almost every late account of the voyages, &c. See *Travels of Jesuits*, Vol. 2. *passim* ; particularly p. 370*. Nor are the frequent quarrels among Christians themselves, and their

makes no greater progress in the East and West Indies.

But it would exceed the limits of this discourse, to enquire into the state of every Heathen country, in order to see what probable reasons might be assigned either for their first rejecting, or not still retaining *Christianity**. Perhaps it may be enough to have given these general hints; which though they were founded on mere conjecture, yet till such an hypothesis can be disproved from fact, ought we not rather to acquiesce in them, than confidently arraign Divine Providence, and rashly censure its ways with man, in matters of the last importance. However, I hope, arguments may be drawn from them, sufficient to stop the mouth of the adversary on these heads; a more particular discussion of which, will be the subject of some following discourses.

I shall only beg leave at present to add an observation or two, concerning that diversity of religion

in
their ill usage of each other in the articles of trade, a less prejudice against their profession: which always received the greatest check from the division raised among its propagators; as was remarkably the case not long ago in *China*. See *Mod. Univ. Hist.* Fol. V. 3. p. 569, &c.

These observations might be carried a great way towards accounting for the slow progress of Christianity among such nations as seem otherwise not ill qualified at present for the reception of it; but that they are not to be carried so far as those persons have done, who pretend that Christians first taught the people of *America* to be wicked. See *Benson App. to his Reasonableness*, &c. p. 302, 303. *Bayle's Dict. art. Leon.* Vol. III. p. 773.

* See *Jortin's* discourses concerning the truth of the Christ. Rel. Disc. 1. and remarks on *Ecclesiastical Hist.* Vol. III. p. 428, &c.

in general which prevails in the world, and the case of those who cannot attain to the knowledge of *Christianity*.

And first, Though I see no reason to affirm with some writers, that God takes equal delight in the various kinds of worship, which happen to be established; and that a specific difference in religion is, in itself, and abstractly considered, equally acceptable to him, with that diversity of beings which he constituted: on the contrary, I think, he has plainly discovered one most perfect standard, and requires all men to approach as near it as they can; and may be said to approve of every just approach to it, and prefer that to an opposite proceeding; in the same manner as he does every other excellence, and improvement of the human mind; where he intends perpetual advancement, (as we have seen) yet from what has been already said, Thus much must be allowed, *viz.* That one of these is in some measure a consequence of the other, during the present laws of nature, in the moral and intellectual world: a difference of capacity, among men, will produce an equal difference in their religious notions, as was shewn above; such difference therefore, in degree of perfection, is made necessary by the constitution of things, and the general dispensations of Providence; and what by the ordinary course of Divine Providence is to men, in some circumstances, rendered unavoidable, that the Divine Goodness will, in these

circum-

circumstances, most undoubtedly excuse, and be ready to accept with all its imperfections *:

The same thing obtains remarkably in each particular system, even of *Christianity* itself; which to different persons, and in different times and places, must appear in a very different light: though so much always, every where, lies level to all, as is indispensably required of each; and so much also as might have a very considerable influence upon their lives and manners. And the same may in a great measure be affirmed of *modern Heathens*; the generality of whom still preserve, in some degree, the great fundamental principles of one supreme God, a *Providence* and a *future State*; as authors of the best credit have assured us †.

Secondly. As to the case of these people in general, we may consider, that if they have fewer and less advantages than others, their native genius and disposition must likewise be inferior; to which their future state may be proportioned: God is not obliged to make all men equally perfect in the next world, any more than in this; and if their capacity be reduced below that of an ordinary *Christian*, a less quantity of happiness may fill it.

However,

* See *Rymer on Rev. Rel.* c. 6. 'Tis a beauty in Providence to advance in the dispensations of religion; to propose various perfections in piety and virtue upon earth, and answer them with respective promotions in heaven, p. 152.

† A collection of them may be seen in *Stackhouse's B. of Div.* Part 3. c. 8. § 2, 3. p. 528, &c. or *Millar's Hist. of the Prop.* c. 5. &c. Comp. *Mod. Univ. Hist.* Fol. V. 3. B. 14. c. 8. and *Grantz Hist. of Greenland*, B. 3. c. 5. § 38, &c.

However, we need not be solicitous about their estate ; much less ought we to cast any ungrateful imputation on the governor of the world, for not having dealt so bountifully with them as with ourselves ; since we know that, in all cases, every one will at length be accepted according to that he has, and not according to that he has not ; and that to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required. We know that all their souls are in the hand of a most merciful Creator, all whose ways are equal ; and who will most assuredly deal with every one according to what is just and right. But of this more hereafter.

I come, in the last place, briefly to observe the great benefit of complying with the terms of the gospel, and the inexcusableness of rejecting it.

The benefit of the Christian institution, above all others, appears in that it naturally fits men for an higher degree of happiness, as well as entitles them to it, by positive covenant. It gives them more just and worthy notions of the divine Being, and the relation they bear to him ; and of the duties which result from that relation. It explains, improves, exalts all those virtues and good dispositions, which are the immutable foundation of happiness, both in this world and the next. It directs us to add to our faith *virtue*, to virtue *knowledge*, to knowledge *temperance*, to temperance *patience*, to patience *godliness*, to godliness *brotherly kindness*, and to brotherly kindness *charity*. It proposes to our study,

study, *whatsoever things are true,—honest,—just,—pure,—lovely,—and of good report*; and binds all these upon us with the strongest *sanc*tions**: at once giving us the most ample instruction in, and the warmest incitement to, the practice of our duty; and affording all fit and necessary means of *grace*, in order to prepare and train us up for glory. And thus, as St. Peter says, *bath the Father given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that bath called us unto glory and virtue*;—that *at length we might be partakers of the DIVINE NATURE.*

The great condition of this covenant is expressed in the text, and many other parts of scripture, by *Repentance: repentance from dead works, and serving the living God*: to which is annexed the very comfortable assurance of entire forgiveness, which was so greatly wanted in the Heathen world.*

This was the substance of our Saviour's preaching, and what the apostles continually testified, both to the *Jews, and also to the Greeks*, namely *repentance towards God*†; that is, a thorough reformation of mind and temper; a renouncing of that extreme fondness for this present world, its vanities and vices; and an improvement in all those graces and good habits, which are absolutely necessary to fit us for

* See Dr. Owen, B. L. § 18.

† Acts xx. 21. V. *infra Note e.* p. 291, and *Jeffery's Tracts*, Vol. II. p. 233. or *Bradford's B. Lect. Serm. 9.*

for the presence of God ; the society of angels ; and the spirits of just men made perfect.

How gracious a design this ! how holy and amiable an institution ! how strongly must it recommend itself to every man's judgment and conscience, when once rightly understood and experienced ! And what infinite reason have we to give continual thanks unto the father, who hath not only prepared for us an *inheritance* ; but likewise laboured to make us *meet* to be *partakers* of it, *among the saints in light* ! And lastly, *how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation* ? How disingenuous, must it be, to refuse and put it from us ! How dangerous, to condemn and blaspheme it !

Rather, may the mercies of God in *Christ Jesus*, engage every one of us to obey the divine precept in the text ; to shake off those vices and indulgences in which the heathens of old so much delighted, and which betray too many now a days into the like degenerate state ; and blind their eyes, and harden their hearts, against all the means of conviction,—namely, pride, covetousness, and sensuality. May we all comply with the apostle's advice, *in walking circumspectly towards them that are without* ; since the reason assigned by him is, in some respects, of equal force at present ;—*because the days are evil*. As Infidelity still abounds, and the *love* of many *waxeth cold*, we, profess the faith of *Christ*, and think we have a more perfect knowledge of it, and are to communicate

nicate the same to others ; we ought to contend so much the *more earnestly* for it, and labour to *adorn the doctrine* of our Lord in all things.

To our daily prayers, therefore, let us add our constant endeavours, that the *kingdom of God may come* on those who have not yet received it ; and be restored in purity, to such as have unhappily rejected it : and finally, let us beware lest in any of *us* be found *an evil heart of unbelief*; let us take care that we be not of those, who, either in principle, or practice, *draw back unto perdition*; *but of them that believe, to the saving of the soul.*

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P A R T II.

The Plan of PROVIDENCE,

With regard to

The Time and Manner of the several Dispensations of Revealed Religion.

Crescat igitur oportet, et multum vehementerque proficiat, tam singulorum quam omnium, tam unius hominis, quam totius ecclesie, atatum ac seculorum gradibus, intelligentia, scientia, sapientia, Vinc. Lir. Common. 1. 28.

III ТЯЧ

The First of October

or when will

The Year and Number of the Incarnation
Differences to Reconcile Religion

and the first day of October, 1812.
The year and number of the Incarnation
and the first day of October, 1812.

The Plan of PROVIDENCE,

With regard to

'The Time and Manner of the several Dispensations of Revealed Religion.

GAL. iv. 4.

But when the fulness of the Time was come, God sent forth his Son.

THE coming of Christ in the flesh is a dispensation so full of wisdom and goodness, that in what light soever it be viewed by us, it will appear highly worthy of its divine Author. The precise time in which he was manifested, though this has been made the subject of more cavils, ancient and modern, than any other circumstance attending it, yet I doubt not but, upon a fair examination, it may be discovered to bear the same characters.

On this head the following questions are usually asked. If the common Father of mankind be infinite in goodness, and the Christian scheme be the only acceptable way of worshipping him, and necessary to our salvation; why was it not communicated to the world much sooner? Why was this greatest of

all

all blessings kept back to the last ;—to the *end of the world*, as it is called *? ‘ if God always acts for the good of his creatures, what reason can be assigned why he should not from the beginning have discovered such things as make so greatly for their good ; but defer the doing of it till the time of *Tiberius* †?—Most of the adversaries to Christianity lay the greatest weight on this objection ‡; and accordingly, several arguments have been offered to remove it: I shall select some of them which appear the most conclusive, and add such farther observations as may help to set the whole in a proper light ||.

When the *fullness of the time* § was come.—The apostle in this chapter is comparing the ages of the world, to the life of man, and its several stages ; as infancy, childhood, youth, maturity. If we reflect on this comparison, we shall find it very just in general ; and that the world itself, or the collective body of mankind, as well as each particular member,

has

* Heb. ix. 26.

† Christianity as old, &c. p. 196. 4to.

‡ Porphyry often urges it. V. Hieron. ad Ctesiphon. Ep. 43. Augustin. Ep. 102. So also Celsus. V. Origin. contra. L. 4. C. Blount, [or the author of a letter to him signed A. W. published under the name of Dryden, in the summary account] was so very confident of its being unanswerable, that he was willing to rest the whole cause of infidelity upon it. Miscell. works, p. 210, &c. The author of Christianity as old, &c. dwelt very largely on it in many parts of his book ; and not to mention Chubb, and others, the author of Deism fairly stated, still repeats the same thing over and over again, from p. 87 to 95, as if no answer had been ever made to it.

|| See an excellent discourse on this subject by Mr. Parr, Norwich, 1780.

§ Or, the proper season, ΚΑΙΡΟΙ ΙΔΙΟΙ. Tit. i. 3.

has from very low beginnings proceeded by a regular gradation in all kinds of knowledge; has been making slow advances towards perfection, in its several periods; and received continual improvements from its infancy to this very day*.

And though in both cases this same progress be sometimes interrupted, and the course of this world and its inhabitants appear, like that of the heavenly bodies, stationary, or suffering some retrogradations; yet we have reason to believe, that these are such, for the most part, in appearance only; that this very lett, where it is real, makes way for a more rapid progres afterwärds (like rivers pent up to produce a larger stream) which seems to bring matters into the same state upon the whole, as if they had been regularly progressive: and may itself be necessary,

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* For a general explanation of this, see *Edward's Survey of all the Dispensations of Religion, &c.* vol. I. p. 396. and vol. II. p. 615.—^{1/2} 31, &c. *Worthington's Essay on Man's Redemption*, c. 8, &c. *Taylor's Scheme of Script. Div. c. 3, &c.*—The last author has made frequent use of this comparison, and drawn the following parallel:

Ages of Man, 6. 16. 20. 30. 40. 50. 60. 70.
Ages of the World, 600. 1600. 2000. 3000. 4000. 5000. 6000. 7000.

But that there is no necessity for carrying on the parallel between these, to the decline of each in their old age, is justly observed by a late writer. 'Here it must be obvious, that the case of nations, and that of individuals, are very different. The human frame has a general course; it has, in every individual, a frail contexture, and a limited duration; it is worn by exercise, and exhausted by a repetition of its functions: but in a Society, whose constituent members are renewed in every generation; where the race seems to enjoy perpetual youth, and accumulating advantages, we cannot by any parity of reason, expect to find imbecilities connected with mere age, and length of days.' *Ferguson, Hist. of Civ. Society.* p. 220. *Comp. Priestley on Governm. Introd.* p. 5. &c..

in order to produce an equal or proportionate happiness among the different nations of the earth (g).

Farther;

(g.) Thus there may be such a circulation in both the natural and moral circumstances of all constitutions, as is commonly observed, without any prejudice to the general progress in perfection, on the whole; nay, that may become in some respects productive of it; a corrupted people fall by their corruptions, and some new ones better constituted and disposed rise on their ruins. Whenever an exertion of the same skill and sagacity, politic or economical; a display of the same hardy virtues which raised the fortunes of any state or family, *viz.* courage, industry, frugality; when this is no longer esteemed necessary for its support, but gives way to an indulgence of the opposite qualities; such state will sink again, and generally become a prey to some more potent rival, who is in the ascending scale, and cultivating those very virtues by which the other rose and flourished; till that, going on in the same course, suffers likewise the same revolution: by which means the seat of empire, opulence, splendor, politeness, is often changed in every quarter of the world, without any real diminution, even of those particular virtues which produce them, on the whole; much less of virtue and happiness in general, but rather with a more universal and equal distribution of the several benefits and blessings among men at large; and the affording each class equal means and opportunities of improving themselves in these respects, as well as in the liberal arts, which indeed usually attend upon each other. ‘The greatest blessing that can befall a state, which is obstinately tenacious of all its ancient institutions, is to be subdued by some people who have a better government, and have made farther advances in the arts of life. And it is undoubtedly a great advantage which the Divine Being has provided for this world, that conquests and revolutions should give mankind an opportunity of reforming their systems of government, and of improving the science of it, which they would never have found themselves.’ *Priestley* on the first Principles of Government, p. 135. ‘Were it not for these great shocks,’ says a Royal author, ‘the universe would continue always the same, and there would be no equality in the fate of nations.’ *Essay on the progress of the understanding in the Arts and Sciences. Memoirs of the H. of Brandenburg.* p. 294.

The same observation may be applied to religious knowledge; and is so applied, with a few leading facts from history to confirm it, by Mr. Rotheram, in his Serm. on the Wisdom of Providence.

The same way of reasoning which is used to prove that each individual attains to a greater sum of happiness upon the whole from

Farther; every one that looks into the history of the world, must observe, that the minds of men have all along been opened by a train of events, improving you upon yourself, diworg redgir a time upon, from low beginnings, from successive alterations, and gradual advances in his several states; than if he had set out at first and continued always fixed even in what is deemed the highest; this argument, drawn from the very nature of intellectual happiness, which is chiefly *relative*, and consists in the reflection on a man's present situation compared with that wherein he once was; or sees others round him now to be:—The same argument may be applied with like propriety to nations and communities, as being composed of individuals, all in like circumstances, and therefore under the like, wise dispensations of Providence. See note 19 to A Bp King. O. of E. p. 108-9. 4th Ed.

How many improvements were carrying on in most parts of the World through several of its darkest ages, by steps opening the way for still higher approaches towards perfection, may be seen in Robertson's judicious observations. Hist. of Ch. V. Thus absolutely rude Barbarism gives way to *feudal* tenures and a standing Militia; these to general *Laws* and a regular administration of Justice; to more liberal *Communities*, p. 30. free Cities, p. 32. and equal distribution of Property. *Chivalry* and *Crusades* introduce generosity, a sense of honour, and a strong spirit of religion however imperfect and confused. p. 69. To these succeed more polished manners, legal settlements, and more sound policy; courts of justice are set up, civil and ecclesiastical constitutions formed, and jurisprudence reduced to a science: general good is educed out of private evils, or a more pure and perfect state raised from a mixed and partial one. Thus did the *Roman* conquests civilize and polish *Europe*: when that unwieldy Empire was corrupted and enervated, it gave way to more barbarous nations; but such as brought along with them liberty and independence; and laid the foundation of our present more happy and better pos'd constitutions. From the thick cloud of Popery bursts out a brighter light than ever shone upon the world since the first planting Christianity, at the revival of *Letters*, notwithstanding their abuses; p. 74, 75. We cannot help discerning their mighty influence on *Manners*, p. 76. and every means of improving the mind of man as well as bettering his condition. Hence the establishment of numerous Schools and Universities; the extension of *Commerce* with all its beneficial effects, p. 81. the adjusting *Property*, p. 40. and fixing a *Balance* of power, p. 112. and at length producing the inestimable blessing of a *Toleration* in religious matters, V. 3. 336.

upon, and adding light to each other ; as that of each individual is, by proceeding from the first elements and seeds of science, to more enlarged views ; and a higher growth. Mankind are not, nor ever have been, capable of entering into the depths of knowledge all at once ; of receiving a whole system of natural or moral truths together ; but must be let into them by degrees ; and have them communicated by little and little, as they are able to receive and relish the communication. In this manner does every art and science make its way into the world : And though now and then an extraordinary genius may arise, and reach as it were some ages beyond that in which he lives ; yet how very few of his contemporaries are able to follow him, or even comprehend what he delivers ! The generality still go step by step in gathering up, and digesting, some small portions of that stock of knowledge, which he poured out at once ; and are for a long time in respect to him, but mere children. So that, notwithstanding a few such extraordinary instances, I think, we may affirm in general, that from the beginning of the world, science, or all kinds of intellectual accomplishments, have been found to make a gradual and pretty regular advance among the bulk of mankind ; but that upon the whole, advancing they have been, and are.

This, I say, is generally so in fact ; and therefore will to a certain degree, have place in religious, as well

well as all other truths*, among men either taken collectively, or in each individual. Why the case is taken thus in both,—why all are not adult at once, in body and mind, concerns not revelation to account for, so much as the religion of nature; at least they are here, as in the former case, both on the same foot; and the same principles may be applied to each of them. And though in this respect, the divine dispensations seem to differ from human arts and sciences, in as much as these are commonly the most

* A more particular proof of this will be given in the III. Part. Nor will it on examination be found inconsistent with the observation of a late judicious writer, [Jeffery. Tracts V. 2. p. 197, &c.] concerning the sacred history of religion under the Patriarchs, Jews, and Christians, viz. That in every state there is first of all the *Institution*, then the *Corruptions*, and lastly the *Reformation* of it; since (not to mention the occasion of this, which in part arises from the natural imperfection of its mode of conveyance, as observed below) we have reason to believe, that in each thorough reformation of religion, there is something raised above the primitive standard in the minds of its recipients; that men are generally prepared to enter more fully into the plan and spirit of it, to arrive at a more clear and complete discovery of its several ends and uses, than at its original institution. Vid. infra P. III. p. 262. Nor do we say, that every nation has improved in religious notices, exactly as it does in learning and politeness; or that one of these must keep pace with the other; since a supposed diversity in their original will constitute a very notorious difference in this respect; the former may have been at first communicated to mankind in all its purity and simplicity; may long continue such, or suffer afterwards in its conveyance by tradition; while men were left in a great measure to themselves in the acquirement of the latter; which must by consequence receive a gradual increase by their repeated efforts: and that disparity observable between the state and progress of these two in several countries, is no bad proof that this was actually the case. See Leland's Advantage and Necessity of the Christ. Rev. V. 1. & 20.

most rude and imperfect at first, and every part of them improving by repeated trials; whereas the others have all that purity and perfection at their delivery, which in their season they are designed to have; and rather lose, in some respects, than get by length of time: yet will not this make any material difference on the whole.

To state this matter right; we ought to distinguish as well between the delivery of a doctrine, and its general reception in the world; which is according to the measure of the recipients only: and which will chiefly depend upon the state, and qualifications of the age they live in: as also, between the supernatural assistance, and extraordinary impressions, at its first publication; and the ordinary state in which it usually appears, and the common progress it will make, so soon as ever these shall come to cease, and it is left to be continued by mere human means; (as we have shewn before that it must be, sometime or other) when we shall find it partaking of the taste and temper of the times through which it passes; and consequently propagated in the same gradual, partial manner, as all other parts of science, all human acquisitions and improvements are.

Let us proceed then to consider the several dispensations of religion in this light, and see whether each will not prove to have been delivered in its proper *season*, and as soon as it became fully necessary;

sary ; and likewise whether each did not appear as perfect as it could be supposed to have been, considering the season in which it was delivered ; and every subsequent one, become an improvement on all those that went before.

We will enquire first, what provision God made for the instruction of mankind in the *infancy* of the world ; and whether it was expedient to send his Son upon their first transgression.

Now we have reason to suppose that *Adam*, during his state of innocence had frequent communication with the Deity* ; from whence he received his information of things, and was directed in the use of them†. And if he had been content to follow that direction, he would undoubtedly have been secured from any pernicious errors ; and supplied with all the instruction and assistance which was then necessary for him, and trained up by degrees to as thorough

* A hint of such communication on the forming of *Eve*, as related by *Adam* himself, together with the general precept concerning *Marriage*, grounded on it, occurs in *Gen. ii. 21.—24.* compared with *Matt. xix. 5, 6. Mark x. 6.—9. Eph. v. 31.*

Though what some writers attribute to Divine *Inpiration* influencing *Adam* on such occasions, seems to be more naturally accounted for from a *Vision* exhibited, or express *Oral Revelation* made to him : the former supposition appears to be the easiest in this case, and may include that whole transaction, as represented to him in a deep *sleep*. Concerning which mode of information see more below. Note n.

† *Gen. i. 28,—30. ii. 19, 20.* Such persons as are apt to question the propriety of that particular restraint which was laid on him in the use of food, may consult the authors cited or referred to by *Patrick*, on *Gen. ii. 17.*

rough an acquaintance with the nature of God, and the things around him, as was agreeable to his own nature ; and consistent with his state and circumstances in the world. But upon his rejecting this guide, and applying elsewhere for knowledge, or setting up to be his own director (*b*) ; that communication might, both with justice and wisdom, be in a great measure withdrawn from him, and he left to the imperfect notice of his senses ; to learn the nature of good and evil, and the way to obtain the one, and avoid the other, by a painful experience*. Yet was he not left wholly to himself in the affair of religion ;

(*b*) That he intended nothing less than this by eating of the forbidden *Tree*, which was the trial of his submission to, or his rejection of the divine government, the *test* of good and evil, or that which would shew which of these he chose, and prove whether he would be good or bad, [Patrick on *Gen.* ii. 9. Taylor on *Or. Sin.* Pt. 3.] may be seen in Rutherford's account of that transaction, *Essay on Virtue*, c. 2. n. * p. 273. Comp. Taylor. Scheme of Script. Div. c. 7. who makes the knowledge of good and evil, the same as *feeling good connected with evil*, tasting a *painful pleasure*, a destructive gratification, &c. by an *Hendiadis*. Worthington [Historical sense of the Mosaic account of the Fall proved and vindicated] supposes several communications of both kinds of knowledge made to our first parents, on their tasting the forbidden fruit ; but not merely by the virtue of such fruit ; which seems rather to have been the serpent's suggestion, *Gen.* 3. 5. of the very same kind and to the same end, with all his other suggestions of divine power annexed to various inanimate beings, whereby the world has been deluded ever since : nor does the same author ascribe to that tree, (though he calls it a mysterious one. p. 19) any *physical* effects infusing any sort of science ; which creates the chief part of the difficulty on this point. Dawson on the three first chapters of *Genesis*, explains it by the trees, in eating of which, *Adam* transgressed the divine law ; thus affecting to become—acting as if he thought himself—more *wise* and *knowing* than his Maker. p. 6. marg. 4.

* See ABP. King's Sermon on the Fall. And Bate on the same subject.

ligion; but directed to such a form of worship, as served to point out, and perpetually remind him, both of the heinousness of his crime, and the dreadfulness of that penalty which he had incurred; and also gave him hopes of future pardon, and a final acceptance with his Creator.

All this seems to have been signified by the institution of animal *sacrifices*, setting before him all the horrors of that *death*, which he had been sentenced to undergo; but which was hitherto suspended; and that of some other creatures demanded probably in its room. This, together with the promise of a future deliverance, in *the seed of the woman*, served for the present to afford some comfort to our first parents under their heavy sentence; and to convince them, that their offended Maker was not absolutely implacable; as well as to lead their posterity to suitable notions of religion, and such a kind of worship, as should constantly reconcile them to the Deity, and remove the guilt of their particular offences; and also prepare them to expect a greater and more noble expiation, ^{which} would take off the whole of *Adam's curse**, and restore both him and his posterity to that *immortal life* which he had forfeited⁽ⁱ⁾: Nay, raise them to
a much

* What that really was, may be seen in *Hallet's Discourses*, Vol. II. p. 276, &c. *Sherlock's Use and Intent of Proph.* p. 142, 143. 2d Ed. *Taylor on Or. Sin*, *passim*; or at the beginning of *Locke's Reason. of Christ. or A Bp. King's Discourse upon the Fall.*

(i) After all that has been writ upon the subject of *sacrifices*, I am forced to ascribe their *origin* to divine appointment: as to the *intention*

a much higher degree of happiness, than he could be conceived ever to have enjoyed in his paradisaical state †. And that this rite was enjoined by God himself, and explained to our first parent, is probable, even from the short account we have of those times; since we find his two sons bringing their offerings to a certain place ‡, and well apprised (by some visible tokens no doubt !!) when they were accepted; as
that

intention of them, we may conceive some to have been enjoined by way of *Tribute*, or as proper acknowledgements of God's dominion over the creatures, and of man's holding that share which was delegated to him from God's hand, and enjoying all earthly blessings through his bounty;—some by way of positive *multū*, *fine*, or *forfeiture*. [Abarb. ex. com. in *Lev.* p. 313 *Cleric.* in *Lev.* i. 2. *Morality of Rel.* p. 35.] to render every breach of duty burdensome, and expensive to the sinner;—some for a *testimony*, or a *representation* of his repentance, his *confession* of such breach, and *deprecation* of its punishment.—[*Taylor*, *Script. Doct. of Atonement*, p. 20. *Forbes's Thoughts on Religion*, p. 124. *Essay on the Nature and Design*, &c. p. 32, &c.] some as a *federal rite* between God and him, or a *form* of entering into *friendship* with his Maker; [*ib. passim. Comp. Richie's Criticism upon Modern notions of sacrifices. App. II. pass.*] and obtaining future *favours* from him: and yet there might be perhaps some farther view to that original grant, or promise, whereby man was to be delivered from the effects of the *first breach*; which, as such, was in each dispensation thought proper to be particularly distinguished. All which appointments, grants, or *covenants*, may likewise be understood (not in their literal, strict sense, or as in themselves absolutely necessary, but) as so many gracious schemes of government, or methods of *economy*; so many merciful expedients to promote the great end of the divine government, and secure obedience to the divine laws: treating mankind, (not like philosophers but) as the generality of people of a more dull apprehension were always

† See King's note 80. p. 413, &c. 4th Ed. or *Bale* on the *Fall.*

‡ *Heb.* xi. 4. Vid *Interp.* & *Grot.* in *Gen.* vi. *Comp. Judg.* vi. 21. xiii. 23. See also *Taylor*, *Scheme of Script. Div.* p. 144.

|| *Gen.* iv. 3, 4. Probably by *Fire*, See *Tenison of Idolatry*, C. 14. p. 320.

that of animal sacrifice was rather than the other : and most probably accepted for that very reason, because it had been appointed by God himself, and was performed agreeably to his command (*k*).

The time of their worship, seems likewise to have had the same original ; as well from God's blessing,

ways to be treated ; and leading them gradually to as just and worthy notions of God and themselves, as they became capable of receiving.—But to ascribe such an institution, as this of sacrificing animals, wholly to the invention of men, especially to the men of those times who were capable of inventing so very little, appears somewhat unnatural.

(*k*) See *Sherlock's Use and Intent of Proph.* p. 73, &c. or *Rymer's Represent.* p. 30. *Ridley's Christian Passover*, &c. *Richie's peculiar Doctrines of Revelation.* Pt. 2. §. 49, &c. This one article of the distinction made between *Abel's offering*, and that of *Cain*, which according to the history, was so notorious as to deject and irritate the latter ; and which cannot, I think, be accounted for otherwise than by the interposition of God himself ; nor that remarkable interposition solved on other principles, than *Cain's* presuming to omit the prescribed victim, through his want of faith ; *Heb.* xi. 4. (otherwise his portion of the fruits of the ground, might appear to be as just and natural a tribute of devotion from one within his province, as some part of the flock was from his brother ; since we have no clear intimation of any other difference in the sincerity of their dispositions, whereon to ground the above distinction between them :) this, I say, seems a sufficient proof, that sacrifice was of divine institution ; and is but ill resolved by *Spencer*, L. iii. c. 4. s. 2. Comp. *Dawson upon Gen.* iv, v. p. 21, &c. or *Ward Diff.* 3. V. 2d.

The same thing is inferred, with a good deal of probability, from the mention of those coats of skins which the Lord God made for *Adam and his wife*, *Gen.* iii. 21. which seem most likely to have been of those beasts that were offered in sacrifice, and might perhaps be in some measure of the same intendment with that sacrifice ; for the discovery of which, rather difficult and disagreeable way of worship, one would think they should stand in need of God's particular direction, as much, at least, as for that other, more easy and obvious one, of cloathing themselves.

Concerning the use and propriety of this kind of cloathing at that time, see *Leland's answer to Christ. as old*, &c. p. 503, &c.

blessing, and sanctifying the *seventh day**; and the ancient method of reckoning by *weeks*†; (a method much more ancient than the observation of the seven *planets*‡,) as from the earliest observance of that Sabbath, in all nations of the world||; without any ground in nature for such practice; or the least hint, of its arising from any human invention (1).

And that in those days they had frequent intercourse with the Deity, and were made sensible of his peculiar

* *Gen.* ii. 3. *Exod.* xvi. 25, 26. Com. *Dawson* on *Gen.* iv, v. p. 19.

† *Gen.* viii. 10. 12. xxix. 27. L. 10.

‡ *V. Witsii Aegyptiac.* L. iii. c. 9.

|| *Joseph.* contra *Ap.* L. ii. *Exod.* xvi. *Philo* de op. mund. *Selden* de jur. n. L. iii. c. x, xi, &c. *Euseb.* evang. præp. xiii. 12. *Grot.* de ver. L. i. c. 16. *Allix's Reflections*, B. i. c. 7. *Jenning's Lect.* B. iii. c. 3. p. 142.

(1) See *Rymer's Represent.* of Rev. Rel. c. 2. or *Ridley's Christian passover*. And the same may be said of *tithes*. *Jenkin*, Vol. I. p. 102. *Durell*, p. 178. Authors on each of these points may be seen in *Waterland's* first charge, p. 41, &c. On sacrifices in particular, *Carpzov.* Introd. p. 118. and *Budde Hist. Eccl.* P. 1. f. 1. 30. ** p. 115. The distinction that we meet with afterwards [*Gen.* vii. 2, 8, &c.] between *clean* and *unclean* beasts, which manifestly relates to sacrifice, [Vid. *Patrick*, ib.] shews likewise the continuance of that kind of worship; and seems to prove, that it was not owing to any human establishment, any more than this direction itself could be. And that the men of these, as well as after ages, had both sufficient authority, and instruction to use the flesh of the former sort of beasts, for food, as well as clothe or shelter themselves with the skins, appears to me as plain, as that the tending and taking care of such was their chief business and occupation. Nor can I comprehend what merit there could be at any time in their making *offerings unto the Lord their God of that which cost them nothing*, of that which they could not eat; or how they came to distinguish between *fat* and *lean*; betwixt the *good choice pieces*, and others; unless they had tasted them themselves: [Vid. *Cleric.* in *Lev.* i. 2. iii. 3. and iv. 17.] though it is upon this chimerical supposition, that the use of animal food was not included in the original grant of absolute dominion

peculiar presence in some places, appears farther, from his discourse with *Cain*, both before and after the murder of his brother*; as also from *Cain's* complaint of being hid from his *face*†. and his going out from the *presence of the Lord* ‡. Nor is it at all likely that *Adam*, who seemed to be so well acquainted with the *voice of God in the garden*|| upon his

nion, given to mankind over all the creatures, (some of which could be of no other service to them) that *Grotius*, and others, founded their attempt to explain away all animal sacrifice, before the deluge. * *Eadem pecudes, quæ ad esum, etiam ad sacrificia a Noacho adhibitæ; scil. mundæ quotquot erant Gen. viii. 20.* Hic sacrificiorum usus cum Diluvio sit antiquior, idem de pecudum esu nobis persuasum, contra quam multi sentiunt. Neque enim *Abel* in sacrificium id obtulisset Deo, quo vesci nefas credidisset; et frustra pavisset agnos quibus non licuisset uti. Quin ipsa distinctio animalium in munda et immunda docet alia permissa fuisse, alia prohibita. Neque enim in animalibus natura sua quicquam immundum. Sed immundum id est ex lege, cuius esus interdicitur. Itaque illud, *Gen. i. 29. Vobis erit in cibum, non solum ad plantas referimus, sed etiam ad animalia, de quibus praecedenti versu actum fuerat.*' *Bochart. Hieroz. p. 11. edit. 4.* Comp. *Heidegger. Dissert. xv. De cibo antideluviano, Clayton's Answer to Delaney, in the blood-eating controversy; or Essay on Sacrifices, p. 165, &c. or Dawson's New translation of the three first chapters of Genesis*, who has shewn this sense to be very consistent with the original.

I have

* *Gen. iv. 6. 9.*

† *Ver. 14.*

‡ *Gen. iv. 16.* Taylor supposes that there might be a standing *Shekinah*, to which the men of these times were to repair upon the sabbath, before which they presented their sacrifice, and performed their devotion. Scheme of Script. Div. c. 14, 15. add *Fleming's Christology*. B. ii. c. 7. Tenison of *Idolatry*, c. 14. But Comp. *Dawson on Gen. iv. v. p. 35, &c.*

|| *Gen. iii. 8. 10.* The curious reader may be entertained with some conjectures concerning a full system of religion, and morality communicated to *Adam* about this time, which Peters grounds on *Job xxviii. 26, &c.* and which he terms a record of something spoken by God to the first man, not to be met with in the book of *Genesis*. Vid. *Crit. Diff. sect. 16. p. 456.*

his fall, should never have heard it there before, on other occasions.

In those times therefore God was pleased to manifest

I have been obliged to differ here from the author of *Philemon to Hydaspe* * who in his fifth part is so far from allowing any kind of sacrifices to be a divine institution, that he declares, ‘the general notion of the thing itself to be in every view of it so glaring an absurdity, that he is amazed that it should ever enter into the head of any rational creature.’ p. 10. Some of the reasons offered to support this declaration are, First, ‘The very idea of a Divine Being implies in it such a superior excellency of nature, as to be wholly out of the reach of our good offices. He neither wants, nor can receive benefit from them.’ ib. Nor, Secondly, ‘can we suppose that he should ever be pleased with the mere waste of his own productions.’ p. 13. Thirdly, It gives one a very degrading idea of his ‘goodness, to consider him as entering into a kind of merchandize with mankind, in the matter of his favours,’ p. 14. And p. 20. ‘The demand of the life of a perfectly innocent creature, to be offered up in sacrifice to god, could give but small encouragement to hope, that God intended to favour a guilty one.’

But I cannot apprehend that such an intercourse as was kept up between God and mankind, by the forementioned offerings, must necessarily be taken in either the first, or third of these views; since the like intercourse is not always so understood, even among men; some of whom are too far exalted above others to receive any real advantage from them, yet nevertheless expect some dutiful acknowledgment of the benefits which they confer on others, and require frequent testimonies of their love; and why should we not imagine a sincerely devout sacrificer to the Deity, able to interpret his devotion in the same sense? or if led to a more gross interpretation of it, why may we not even suppose the Deity condescending in that case to set him right, by some such kind expostulation as the following! *Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof. Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most High. And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.*

Nor does there seem to be any more merchandize in any sort of sacrificial offerings, than in those other of vows, prayers, praises, and thanksgivings, which still make up an essential part of our religion; from their relation to which, the former always derived all

* The late Mr. Coventry.

fest himself to the *senses* of men, and visibly conduct them, by the *angel* of his presence, in all the chief concerns of religion. And this *infant* state of the world must stand in need of his especial guidance,

and

all their value, and were perhaps only a strong, lively manner of expressing them ; [Qui sacrificat, id idem significat actione et gestu, quod qui precatur ore suo profitetur. *Vitrina Diff.* Vol. I. p. 289. Comp. *Patrick* on 1 Sam. xiii. 12.] nor probably more strong, and explicit, than might be necessary for the times ; nor likely to convey any more degrading ideas of the divine goodness (at least not more than were adapted to, and unavoidable in the then low state of reasoning) than does the inward tribute of *a broken and a contrite heart*, which is still requisite on some occasions, as well as the outward public profession of our dependence on the Deity, the *rendering to him the calves of our lips* ; which when the understandings of men were ripe for it, and they able to keep up a tolerable sense of duty by these means, have of themselves been, and are accepted by the same *gracious* being in the room of the other ; (*Hos. xiv. 2. Heb. xiii. 15.*) though these be founded equally on human weakness, and at a like distance from the excellency of the divine nature.

As to the *Consumption* of the fruit of the ground in offerings ; why might not men conceive, that the same God who had given them all things richly to enjoy, might reasonably expect a return, as it were, of some part of them, merely in token of gratitude for the rest : as an exercise of their faith in, a memorial of their dependance on, him for a continuance of them, and a pledge of their obedience, in applying each to the good purposes for which he had bestowed them ? and this without the least dread of affronting him by an implication that he either wanted any thing, or reaped any kind of benefit by their presents.

Nor need even such as have the most imperfect notions of his power and bounty, apprehend this to be any dangerous misapplication of these gifts, on a persuasion that he had required it ; though without some tradition of that, *Socrates* himself [p. 10.] might perhaps justly doubt of the propriety, and acceptableness of this kind of worship : as he had the like scruples about *prayer*, [*Plat. 2. Alcib.*] as also *Maximus Tyrius*, long after.

But if ever these, or any such offerings were in fact required, and these or the like ends might be served by them, then will this be far from *a meer useless waste*, though the things offered be destroyed : nor indeed can I see any material difference between a religious dedication of such things, and the destruction of them ;

or

and protection. They were not yet able (with *Moses*^{*}) to see him *who is invisible*; and perform a purely rational, and spiritual worship. They could have no very perfect notions of his nature and providence; nor had they much leisure for speculation, and refinement in these subjects. They were all tillers of the ground, or keepers of cattle; employed sufficiently in cultivating this new world; and through the curse, brought on it by their forefather, forced with him to eat their bread *in the sweat of their brow*. We may suppose the generality of them, to have been

no

or how they could be presented to the gods at all, if they were still kept for the use of their respective owners.

The case, I apprehend, will not be much different as to the *life of an innocent creature*; for if this creature be considered as a man's property, why may not the oblation of it be assigned by way of composition, mulct, or commutation for such faults as he is sensible of, and serve as a significant representation, and acknowledgment of such his sense; and be accepted by the offended Governor of the world, in lieu of a more condign punishment; by virtue of such assignment doing away his guilt, and being a sufficient ground of encouragement for him to hope for a full restoration to the divine favour; without any further import? Though if this should have yet a more distant and extensive view, it answers these ends for the present never the less; and is more like all other parts of the divine œconomy, which serve for various purposes, immediate and remote.

Upon the whole, I cannot help concluding it to be more probable in itself, and more analogous to the general course of things, that this so universal a practice of sacrificing animals, however odd and unaccountable it may seem to be in some respects at present;—should owe its origin to some divine appointment; be propagated every where by primitive tradition; and afterwards (as in too many other cases) by a pretended imitation, and improvement; but a real misrepresentation and abuse; receive such gradual alteration, from the authors of all superstition and vice, as at length to arrive at that degree of enormity, which this writer has so well described.

* *Heb.* xi. 27.

no better than *Anthropomorphites*†, in their conceptions of the Divine Being; as many were found to be long after them, in much more knowing times ‡; and as perhaps a great part of the world yet are, by giving way to their imagination, notwithstanding the clearest revelations, and plainest arguments to the contrary. Frequent communications then might be necessary, to keep up a tolerable sense of religion among men, and secure obedience to the divine institutes*; and that the Almighty did not exhibit such manifestations of himself as were either necessary, or fit to answer this end, cannot be concluded from the silence of those very short accounts we have in sacred history, as was observed before.

Besides, *Adam* himself continued nine hundred and thirty years, an eye-witness of the power and providence of God; and could not but reflect on those remarkable instances of both, exerted at the beginning of his own life†; and must have acquainted the rest

† The reason of this is given at large by the author of *Glory of Christ as God-man*, Disc. I. sect. 1.

‡ ‘*Lactantius* is to prove that God has *human passions*—to prevent being misunderstood, and to provide a proper subject for these passions, he contends strongly for God’s having a *human form*; no discreditable notion at that time in the church.’ *Div. Leg. B. iii. sect. 4.* p. 372. add *Locke* on *H. U. B. i.c. 4.* sect. 16. and *Huet. Origen. L. ii. B. i. sect. 8.* p. 30.

* Καὶ γὰρ ἡμῖν ἐν ἀρχῇ τὸ κοσμικὸν ἐπὶ τῶν βασικῶν τὴν ἀνθρώπινην φύσιν, ἵνα προκοπτεῖς γενναίειν εἰς συνεῖδην, καὶ τὰς λοιπὰς ἀρίστας, καὶ τὴν ἴνστρον των τίκτυντι, δυνάμεις καὶ καθ’ ἕαντας ζῆν, & χρηζόντες αὐτοῖς προπονοῦσθαι καὶ σικαλομένουσθαι ἀνθρ. μητέ παραδέξεις ἐπιφέρουσας τὸν ἀπειλημένων τῷ τῷ θεῷ βιληματι. *Orig. cont. Cels.* p. 216. Ed. Cant.

† See *Allix’s Reflections*, B. I. c. 8, &c.

of mankind with all those truths relating to the Deity, that were implied in the original creation of man, and his first situation in the world †; as well as his present state of punishment, and prospect of a future redemption ; which were exhibited together, and doubtless explained to him, upon his fall. He was all that while, a living monument both of the justice, and mercy of God ; of his extreme hatred, and abhorrence of sin ; as well as his great love, and long-suffering towards the sinner. He was very sensible how sin entered into the world, and could not but apprise his children of its author ; and at the same time inform them, of the unity of *God*, and his dominion over the evil one ; and assure them of his being the supreme governor, and judge of all. For so much, I think, might easily be gathered from that transaction in paradise, in what manner soever we understand it ; (I think ABP. King has said enough to vindicate the literal sense in his excellent Sermon on the Fall, annexed to his Origin of Evil) not to mention that the garden of *Eden*, the great scene of this trans-

† How he was able always to convince the world that he was the first man, from a peculiarity in the formation of his body. See *Cumberland* De leg. patr. p. 409, 410. *Adamus, ejusque uxor Eva secundum naturam non potuerunt habere umbilicos in medio ventrum suorum, uti habent omnes homines qui nascuntur e mulieribus propter vasa umbilicalia quæ umbilico inseruntur, et e Placenta uterina nutrimentum afferunt infantibus, in utero matrum suarum generatis, indeque prodeuntibus.* Nec credibile est Deum creavisse in protoplastis umbilicos qui iis essent prorsus inutiles, et eos redderet obnoxios periculoso morbo qui omphalocele dicitur a medicis. ib.

transgression, might perhaps for some time be visible*. This would produce a tolerable idea of the Divine Being, and afford sufficient motives to obey him. And accordingly we find the effects of it, in the righteous family of *Seth*, who began to *call upon the name of the Lord*†; or, as that text is better rendered in the margin, *call themselves by the name of the Lord*‡. They soon distinguished themselves from the posterity of *Cain*; and for their extraordinary piety, were entitled the people or *Sons of God*||. Of them, sometime after, sprang a person so very eminent for goodness and devotion, as to be exempted from *Adam's* sentence, and the common lot of his sons: who after he had walked with God three hundred years, or held converse with Angels§; and prophesied to his brethren, and forewarned them of the approaching judgment*, was *translated that he should not see death.*

* *Allix*, Reflect. p. 62. supposes it to have continued till the deluge.

† *Gen. iv. 26.*

‡ See *Shuckford*, Vol. I. p. 42, &c. *Van Dale's Orig. & Progr. Idol.* c. 2. *Stillingfleet*, *Iren.* c. 3. p. 73. 4to. Or this man *Enos*, was called by the name of *Jehovah*. *V. Dawson on Gen. iv. v. p. 37, &c.*

|| *Ward*, *Diff. iv. v. 2d.*

§ *Cleric. in Gen. v. 22. Comp. Dawson, ib. p. 55.*

* *Jude 14.* He foretells likewise the particular manner in which that judgment was to be inflicted, and by way of sign or confirmation (a frequent method on such occasions. *Comp. If. viii, &c.*) imposes on his son the name of *Methuselah*, importing that when the person so called was dead, there should come an *Inundation of Waters*. And so exactly did that event correspond with his name, that in the very year he died, the earth was overwhelmed by the deluge. *Owen, B. L. S. G. Bochart Phal. L. 2. C. 13.*

death†. This very remarkable event, must have made the world about him, sensible of the good providence of God, inspecting and rewarding his faithful servants; and one would think it should have induced them to look up to a better state than the present; where righteous *Enoch* was already entered, and whither all such might expect in due time to arrive. To *Adam* himself, if he was then alive (as the *Samaritan account* makes him to be above forty years after) it must have been a lively and affecting instance of what he might have enjoyed, had he preserved his innocence; as well as an earnest of the promised victory over the evil one, who robbed him of it; and a strong ground of confidence that he, and the rest of his posterity, should not be left entirely in their present state; but some time or other, be restored to the favour of their maker, and behold his presence in bliss and immortality‡. At the same time lived *Lamech*,

who

† *Heb.* xi. 5. comp. *Eccl.* xlii. 14. and *Arnald* upon *Wisdom*, iv. 10. His translation was probably effected in the same public manner as that of *Elijah*, 2 *King.* xi. 7. and the ascension of *Christ* himself. *Acts* i. 9. ‘There is no doubt but his contemporaries had some visible or sensible demonstration of this fact. And as the fate of *Abel* was an argument to their reason, so the translation of *Enoch* was a proof to their senses (as it were) of another state of life.’ *Peters Crit. Diff. on Job*, p. 274.

‡ See *Bull’s Discourses*, Vol. I. p. 343. Vol. II. p. 585, &c. *Worthington* argues farther, ‘that this translation of *Enoch* was moreover an intimation to mankind, that, if they overcame the depravity of their nature as he did, they should be delivered from the ill consequences of it as he was; the chiefest of which was death, temporal and eternal, both which he avoided:’ and this author supposes him, upon what ground I know not, to be a type of many others being able to do the very same. *Essay*, p. 72, &c.

who was contemporary both with *Adam* and *Noah*, and probably well acquainted with the counsels of God ; and foretold that that part of the curse which related to the barrenness of the earth, would in a great measure be taken off ; as it was, in his son's days*. At length, when the whole world became full of *unbounded lust*, and impurity † ; of rapine and lawless violence ‡ : when those *giants in wickedness* ||, had filled the earth with tyranny, injustice, and oppression ; and the whole race of men were grown entirely *carnal* §, and abandoned ; and every *imagination of their hearts* was only evil continually ** : God, whose spirit had been hitherto striving with them, was at length obliged, even in mercy to themselves, as well as their posterity, to cut them off ; after having raised up another prophet ††, to give them frequent warning of their fate ; and allowed them

* Gen. v. 29. See *Sherlock's Use and Intent*, p. 89, &c. and *Ogilby* on the Deluge. Comp. *Dawson* in loc. p. 57. with *Worthington*, Eff. p. 83, &c.

† Gen. vi. 2. † ver. 11. || ver. 4. § ver. 3. Seeing that really he is (nothing but) flesh, or wholly given up to the works of it.

** ver. 5. That there was probably no settled government in the antediluvian world, see *Taylor*, Scheme of Script. Div. c. 19. p. 194.

†† 1 Pet. iii. 19. Heb. xi. 7. *Noah the eighth, a preacher of righteousness* ; (2 Pet. ii. 5.) or, as some more justly render it, *the eighth preacher*. (see *Jenkin*, Vol. I. p. 46. and *Pool* in loc. n. 4.) For he was neither the eighth person in descent from *Adam*, nor does his being one of the eight persons in the ark, seem to be a construction either very natural or pertinent. Add *Pearson* on the Creed, Part II. p. 115. 2d Edit. *Cumberland de Leg. Patr.* p. 419.

them a hundred and twenty years for repen-
tance*.

Thus did God make ample provision for the in-
struction and improvement of the world, for the first
sixteen hundred years; namely, by the frequent ap-
pearance of *Angels*; by the *spirit of prophecy*, which
is by some supposed to have been hereditary in the
heads of families in those times†; and by an uninter-
rupted *tradition*; there being but two generations
from *Adam* to *Noah*; so that we cannot well imagine
that the knowledge and true worship of the Deity
during that time, could be entirely lost in any part of
the world ‡.

But we are to remember, that the world was still
but in its state of *childhood*; which it most aptly re-
sembled,

* *Gen. iv. 3.* This dispensation (of the Deluge) as all the
rest, had relation to the morals of mankind; and the evident de-
sign of it was to lessen the quantity of vice and prophaneness, and
to preserve and advance religion and virtue in the earth; the great
end for which the earth, and man in it were created. This end
it was well adapted to obtain in the then present state of things,
and in all future generations. In the present state of things it
prevented a total corruption. For if the whole tainted part had
not been cut off, a single family would soon have been drawn in,
or destroyed: and then the whole globe must have been ruined,
and the schemes and purposes of God from the very beginning of
the world had been defeated. But by reserving a select family
for the continuation of the human species, the system of the
divine counsels was preserved entire, and the most proper method
was devised for the establishment of true religion and virtue in the
new world; as the family of *Noah* enjoyed much greater advan-
tages for this end than the family of *Adam* at the beginning of
things. *Taylor, Scheme of Script. Div. c. 18. Com. Owen's In-*
tent and Propriety of Script. Mir. sect. 2.

† *Jurieu Crit. Hist. Vol. I. p. 34.*

‡ That *Tradition* was the chief way of conveying religion in
those early ages, see *Leland's Advantage, &c. of the Christ. Rev.*
Vol. I. c. 1.

sembled, in those extraordinary aids, and occasional supports afforded it; in the repeated instances of that paternal care, and tenderness, with which the Creator watched over it: and I have been the more particular in examining whence it might derive its notices of God and religion, and how far these could probably extend; in order to obviate some mistakes, which are commonly made in the history of those times, by setting out wrong; and supposing the first man to have been superior to all his posterity*, both in natural abilities, and actual knowledge, because more innocent than they; and imagining that the primitive religion was more perfect, because it was more naked, plain, and simple than that in after times: by which means, we are forced to make the state of the world often go backwards, rise and fall again; and abound with great breaks and inequalities; instead of observing that more even progress, which will appear in all parts of the divine œconomy.

To proceed. After the *deluge*, God is pleased to converse again, and make another more clear and extensive covenant with mankind in the person of *Noah*; who was a new example of his power, his justice, and his goodness; and whose family had been sufficiently convinced of his supreme dominion over

* Vid. Gen. Dict. art. *Adam*, p. 228, &c. or South's very extraordinary sermon on that subject. Comp. *Taylor on Orig. Sin*, p. 170, &c. 2d Edit. and Script. Scheme of Div. c. 10. *Adam*, when created, may be considered as a child, without knowledge, learning, and experience, ib. p. 32.

the earth and heaven ; of his utter abhorrence of sin ; and his determination not to let it go unpunished. Nor could they, or their children, for some time, want any other argument to enforce obedience, fear, and worship*. The knowledge of mankind therefore after the flood, must for a considerable time be better than ever it was before ; might safely be propagated by tradition ; and did not stand in need of any farther revelation, *Noah* himself having continued three hundred and fifty years. *Gen. ix. 28.*

But when by degrees many of them † had corrupted this tradition in the most essential parts, especially with relation to the object of their worship ‡ ; and

* See *Allix*, B. i. c. 13. The observations and reflections they might make on this extraordinary transaction are well imagined by *Winder*, Hist. of Know. c. 5. sect. 2, 3, 4. and *Taylor*, Scheme, &c. c. 18.

† Vid. *Winder's Hist. of Kn.* p. 110, &c. *Patrick* in *Gen. xi. 2.*

‡ Lord *Bolingbroke*, in his 2d and 3d Essays, has taken great pains to prove, that such corruptions in religion could never be introduced so fast : and Eff. 2. p. 20. ‘ supposes it impossible for any man in his senses to believe, that a tradition derived from God himself through so few generations, was lost among the greatest part of mankind, or that Polytheism and Idolatry were established on the ruins of it in the days of *Scrug*, before those of *Abraham*, and so soon after the deluge.’ To which a sufficient answer may be had within two pages of the same extraordinary author. ‘ The vulgar embrace them [Polytheism and Idolatry] easily, even after the true doctrine of a Divine Unity has been taught and received ; as we may learn from the example of the *Israelites* : and superstitions grow apace and spread wide, even in those countries where Christianity has been established, and is daily taught ; as we may learn from the examples of the Roman churches, to say nothing of the reformed, who are less liable to the objection.’ ib. p. 22. Vol. IV. Comp. p. 224, &c. where he contradicts this again, disallows both the facts and application of them, but does not deny the truth of the former so much as the

and instead of one supreme God, had set up several orders of inferior ones ; and worshipped all the host of heaven ; (as they began to do in the time of *Peleg*, the fifth, according to the *Hebrew* computation, from *Noah*) and at the same time were uniting under one head, and forming an *universal empire* ; and erecting a monument or land mark *, to preserve and perpetuate this their union † : in order to prevent their being all corrupted at once, God saw it necessary to come down ‡, and disperse them into several distinct colonies ‡, by dividing them into so many *languages*, (or causing that *discord* § among them, which made their future intercourse impracticable ; and thereby rendered

the latter, and all in a breath. But if any one wants to see more of his Lordship's contradictions, a pretty complete list of them may be found ready drawn out, in the *Analysis* of his philosophical works, printed A. D. 1755.

* That this is the meaning of the word כָּו. *Gen.* xi. 4. which our translators have improperly rendered *name* here, see *Goujet*, *Introd.* p. 2. * *De L'Origine des Loix*, &c. and *Bryant*, *Anal.* pass.

† See *Worthington*, B. Lect. § 8.

‡ *Gen.* xi. 5, 7. See *Le Clerc* upon the place, with *Winder*, *Hist. of Kn.* p. 118. or *Taylor*, *Scheme of Script. Div.* c. 21.

|| The date of this great event is fixed with some probability to 240 post Diluv. See *Rowland's Mona Antiq. Restor.* 281, &c. 2d Ed. That there was not only a general dispersion of the sons of *Noah* about this time, but also a particular division of the earth amongst them, see *Bryant's Observ.* on parts of ancient *Hist.* p. 260, &c. Some of the benefits of this Dispersion are described by *Dr. Owen*, B. L. § vii.

§ *Pf.* lv. 9. *Le Clerc*, *ibid.* & *Prolegom.* in *Com. Diff.* 1. § 3. & in *Gen.* xi. 9. Add 1 *Cor.* i. 10. and *Vitrina*, *Obs. Sac.* L. 1. c. 9. § 6, &c. *Shuckford*, Vol. I. B. iii. p. 146. *Hutchinson* on the Confusion of Tongues. Another account of this *Confusion*, making it rather an oblivion of the old language, than any infusion of new ones, is given by *Rowland*, *ib.*

dered it impossible for any one species of idolatry to be universally established ; nay, gave a considerable check to the progress of false worship in general ; which had most probably been introduced by the rulers* of those times ; and for which reason, their people then might be driven from them, to hinder its being universally imposed ; as God's own people were afterwards dispersed every where to cure it.

After the *dispersion*, particular revelations were in all probability vouchsafed, wherever men were capable of improving by them, and disposed to regard them. We find *Peleg* had his name prophetically given from that *dispersion*, which was to happen in his days†; and not only his Father *Eber*, but all the heads of families, mentioned in the eleventh chapter of *Genesis*, from *Noah* to *Abraham*, are supposed to have had the spirit of prophecy, on many occasions. However, *Noah* was undoubtedly both

priest

* See *Shuckford*, Vol. I. B. v. p. 353, &c. The same author gives a probable reason for this, Vol. II. B. ix. p. 457, &c. Comp. *Taylor's Scheme of Script. Div.* c. 20.

† *Gen. x. 25.* Vid. *Winder*, p. 130, and *Rotheram's Serm.* on the Wisdom of Providence in the administration of the World ; who supposes that not only the intention, and end of God's dispersing mankind over the face of the earth, but likewise the plan of their dispersion was communicated to them, p. 15. Comp. *Josephus H. J. L.* i. c. 4. ‘ It was in *Chaldea, Canaan, Egypt*, and the neighbouring countries, says a learned writer, [Leland, *Advantage and Necessity of the Christ. Rev.* Vol. I. P. i. c. 19. p. 435.] that the great corruption first began ; or at least these were the places where it made the most considerable progress, and from whence it seems to have been derived to other nations. And accordingly it pleased God in his wise and good providence to take proper methods for putting an early check to the growing corruption in those parts of the world where it chiefly prevailed.’

priest and prophet ; and living till *Abraham* was near sixty years old, might well be able to keep up a tolerable sense of true religion in the world ; which was then but very thinly inhabited†. His religious son *Shem* likewise was living so long as *Jacob's* time, and could not but be a great means of continuing the faith and worship of the true God among his descendants*.

But notwithstanding a few righteous men, and some remains of true religion ; idolatry, with its perpetual attendants vice and superstition†, had in a little time so far prevailed among the sons of *Noah*, as to make it highly expedient for God, as well to shorten the lives of men ‡, as to withdraw his *Shekinah*, or presence from the generality, who had made themselves unfit for such communication ; and to single out some particular people, to bear his name, and be his

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† *Gen.* xiii. 9. Vid. Part iii. p. 208, note (W) ; and *Newt. Chron.* p. 185—6. The *ark* itself, a certain monument of the deluge, continued several ages after *Abraham*, and preserved the memory of it, even among Pagans ; (Vid. *Lucian de D. S. Allix. Reflect.* p. 68. *Joseph. Antiq.* L. i. c. 3. *ib.* 20. 2. & *Chrysostom. Orat. de Perf. Char. Bryant.* v. 2. p. 217. &c.) this might serve as the *Prototype*, or model for ship-building. *Evelyn on Navigation and Commerce.* p. 18. From whence the story of *Argo* and the fabulous *Argonauticks*. *Bryant.* Vol. 2. p. 496, &c.

* Concerning the notices of religion in the world about this time, see *Allix*, B. i. c. 14. *Winder*, c. 9. *Comp. Meier, Disp. Theol. de Vestig. Rel. Patriarch. inter Gentes. Bremæ,* 1757.

† The attendants and effects of idolatry are well described by the author of *Wisdom*, c. xiv. 23—29. So that there reigned in all men, without exception, blood, manslaughter, theft, and dissimulation, corruption, unfaithfulness, tumults, perjury. 25. Disquieting of good men, forgetfulness of good turns, defiling of souls, changing of kind, disorder in marriages, adultery, and shameless uncleanness, 26. Add c. xii. 4, 5, 6. Vid. *Arnald in loc.*

‡ Concerning this great change in the divine œconomy, see Part III.

more immediate servants ; and thereby preserve his worship pure, in some part of the world, amidst the various corruptions that were going to overspread it.

With this view *Abraham* is called ; who was driven out of an idolatrous nation, in all probability, for opposing and refusing to comply with its idolatry^{||} ; and after many remarkable trials of his faith and constancy, admitted to a particular intimacy, and *friendship* with his Maker. God enters into *covenant* with him, institutes *circumcision*, as the *sign* and *seal* of this covenant* engages to be his present guide, protector and defender ; and to bestow, not only all kinds of temporal benefits on him, and on his seed† ; but to make some of them the means of conveying one of a higher kind to all the nations of the earth ; who should in an extraordinary manner

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|| *Maim.* *M. Nev.* *Buxtorf.* p. 421. See *Chandler's Vind.* O. *Test.* Pt. ii. p. 474. *Judith* v. 8. *Shuckford*, Vol. I. B. v. p. 269. It is a tradition among both *Jews* and *Mahometans*, that *Abraham's* father *Terab* was a maker and vender of *Images*, from whom some derive the name of *Teraphim* ; (i. e. *Terab-aphim*, images representing *Terab's* countenance) and tell many stories of his difference with *Abraham* for a time on that account. Some of these may be seen in *Calmet*, or *Bayle*, Dict. Art. *Terab*, and *Abraham*. This is consistent with the account of *Abraham's* having once been himself an idolater, as some interpret, *Rom.* iv. 5.

* *Rom.* iv. 11. Concerning the propriety and various uses of this institution, see *Le Clerc.* on *Gen.* xvii. 10, 11, 12.

† That the promise of possessing all the land from *Egypt* to *Euphrates* (*Gen.* xii. 7. xiii. 14, 15. xv. 18, &c.) was made to *Abraham's* seed in general, though the especial covenant was restrained to a part of them, see remarks on part of the 3d Vol. of the *Mor. Philos.* p. 89, 90. That the full execution of the former promise depended on their obedience, vid. *Durell.* App. p. 153.

be blessed through him †. Abraham, no doubt, was fixed upon for his singular piety, and trust in God under various trials; and entitled to these high privileges by his extraordinary virtues; for whose sake (or rather for the sake of encouraging and rewarding of which virtues) the same privileges were continued to a part of his posterity, though far less worthy of them. But we cannot think that it was so much on his own account that he was thus distinguished; or that *for his sake only**, faith, or sincerity, is said to be imputed to him for righteousness; but rather for the common benefit of mankind was all this done; in order to make him an instrument, in the hand of Providence (and a fit one he was) to convey the same faith, and fear of God, to all the nations round him. And accordingly we find him greatly favoured, and distinguished among the neighbouring princes; and *Kings reproved for his sake*; who are acquainted with his prophetic character, and desire his intercession with God †, and obtain assistance through that intercession. History tells us of his conversing on the
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† Gen. xii. 3. xxii. 18. xxvi. 4. xxviii. 14. Rom. iv. 16, 17. Gal. iii. 8. 17. That the especial covenant, limiting the Messiah's descent to one branch of Abraham's posterity, and that peculiar dispensation which attended it, were not inconsistent with the original grant or promise, which constituted Abraham the Father of many Nations, from whom all nations of the earth were to derive a Blessing, and to whom therefore the Gospel is said to have been preached before Christ came into the world; see Taylor's Covenant of Grace, p. 6. 13, &c.

* Rom. iv. 24.

† Gen. xii. 17. and xx. 7.

subject of religion, with the most learned *Egyptians*†, and being very highly esteemed by them; from whom probably they afterwards derived the rite of circumcision ‡, among other religious institutes. We are informed, that his name was had in the greatest veneration all over the East*: that the *Magians*, *Sabians*, *Perians*, and *Indians* all gloried in him, as the great reformer of their religion†. And as he was let into

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† *Josephus* L. i. c. 9. contr. *Apion*. passim. *Damascen.* in *Euseb.* *Præp. Evang.* L. ix. c. 16. There is at this day, a select number of families in *Egypt*, who call themselves descendants from *Abraham*, and are in high esteem there, and give themselves up intirely to the study of Music, Medicine, and Astronomy, and never intermix with any other *Egyptians*, or marry out of their own families. *Nouveau Voyage de Grece, d'Egypt, &c.* *Hague*, 1724 p. 106, &c.

‡ *Shuckford*, B. v. p. 322, &c. and B. vii. p. 132, &c. Comp. *Spencer de Leg.* I. 4. & *Cleric in Gen.* xvii. 10.

Others derive it from *Joseph*. *Univers. Hist.* Vol. I. p. 527. note r. and p. 453. note z. Add *Jenkin*, Vol. I. p. 97. *Grot. Ep.* 327.

Others suppose it introduced by *Ishmael*, (Rev. Exam. Vol. II. p. 190.) or his posterity the *Shepherds*, or *Arabians*, as is made very probable by the author of Remarks on part of the 3d Vol. of the *Mor. Philos.* p. 59, &c. Comp. *Witsii Ægypt.* L. iii. c. 6. *Bochart. Geogr.* L. iv. c. 32. This subject is largely discuss'd by *Findlay*, *Vind.* pt. 2. § 21.

* Vid. *Euseb. Præp. Evang.* L. ix. c. 16, 17, &c.

† *Prideaux*, Part i. B. iv. p. 225. Comp. *Hyde De Rel. Vet. Pers.* c. 2. and 3. and *Univers. Hist.* pass. 'Tis remarkable that the *Lacedemonians* retained the memory of him for above 1600 years, and under their king *Areus* claimed kindred with the *Jews*, as being of the flock of *Abraham*. I *Maccab.* xii. 21, &c. *Joseph. Ant.* L. xii. 5. (see *Waterland's Postscript to Script. Vind.* Pt. 2. p. 142. or *Jenkin*, Vol. I. p. 53. and 90. How this might come about, see *Stillingfleet*, *Orig. S.* B. iii. c. 4. or *Shuckford*, B. x. p. 51.) nor is it unlikely that from the *Abrahams*, or sons of *Abraham*, the *Brachmans* might descend, and derive their name. *Newt. Chron.* p. 351. 'Tis likewise observed, that the *Perians* adhered so strictly to the religion of *Abraham*, as to keep clear of the most gross idolatry, for a long time. Vid. *Cleric. in Isai. 9.* & *Ind. Philolog. Stanley*, voc. *Statua*.

the various counsels of the Almighty, and taught to reason, and reflect upon them; as he was fully apprised of God's just judgment in the miraculous overthrow of the four wicked cities †, with the particular circumstances of it ‡; as well as his most gracious intent of providing a Redeemer for all mankind, and *rejoiced to see his day §, and saw it*; 'tis very probable,

† Some authors call them *five*, according to the common name, *Pentapolis* (*Wisdom x. 6. Joseph. B. J. v. 8.*) including *Zoar*, which had been condemned to destruction, but was spared at the intercession of *Lot*. Of these, two are sometimes named by themselves, as being superior to the rest. *Gen. xix. 24, 25.*

Some suppose that, beside the four principal cities in that valley (*Sodom, Gomorrah, Adma, Zeboim, or Bela, Gen. xiv. 2. Deut. xxix. 23.*) there were nine other inferior ones destroyed (called the *daughters of Sodom, Ezek. xvi. 46, &c.*) which agrees with the account of *Strabo, Geogr. L. xvi. Comp. Cleric. App. Com. in Gen.*

‡ *Gen. xviii.* Some of the causes, ends and uses of this severe dispensation, as well as testimonies of its reality, are set forth in *Owen's B. L. § 9.*

§ *Joh. viii. 56. οὐαλλαρε, gestiebat, longed earnestly.* *Warburton supposes, that the command of sacrificing Isaac, was a mode of information by action, instead of words, concerning the great Sacrifice of Christ, given to Abraham at his own earnest request. Div. Leg. Vol. II. Pt. ii. which is well illustrated by Gilbank, Script. Hist. of Abr. p. 113, &c. and might perhaps receive some confirmation, by observing that this scene most probably was placed upon the very spot where Christ actually suffered:* (See *Crit. Notes, Genes. xxii. 1, 2. Comp. Pool, Synops. ib. and Patrick on Gen. xxii. 9.*) in which such another coincidence might be observed between the type and person typified, in respect of his death, as *Episcopius* remarks concerning the place and circumstances of his birth. Nempe ita ego mecum sentio; Id non casu, sed, Deo ita procurante, evenisse, ut vel hac etiam ratione Deus testatum faceret filium hunc, Davidis filium esse, paremque cum eo fortunata sortitum atque expertum esse. *Enimvero pastor fuerat David, qui vitam suam in stabulo forte, forte, inquam, hoc ipso in loco ubi Iesum Maria peperit, egerat, et quando ad regiam dignitatem vocabatur, gregem patris sui paseebat, atque ita veluti a stabulo et pabulo ovium ad regium thronum vchebatur, uti dilecte*

bable, that he and his family would propagate these doctrines, together with their consequences, where-soever they went*.

But though the Deity was pleased to manifest himself, in a more frequent and familiar manner, to *Abraham*; yet were not the rest of the world wholly overlooked. There were, no doubt, many other shining lights, and eminent professors of pure religion, who, like *Lot* in the midst of *Sodom*, were as eminently preserved, and supported in that profession: we see *Laban*, and *Bethuel* acknowledging the *Lord*†; and the former of them, notwithstanding the mixture of Idolatry in his household ‡ favoured with a Vision §: Nor was the spirit of prophecy, or divine revelation, confined to *Abraham*, or to his family. In *Canaan* we meet with *Melchizedeck*, king, and priest of the most high God**: who is acquainted with the blessing promised to *Abraham*, and confirms it to him; and to whom the patriarch himself pays homage. *Abimelech* king of *Gerar* receives an admonition from

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diserte ipse fatetur, Psal. lxxviii. 70, 71, 72. In stabulo igitur cum nascitur filius ejus, annon patrem suum referat? Episcop. Inst. Theol. L. iii. c. 12. p. 175.

* *Gen. xviii. 19.* See *Burnet's Boyle's Lect.* pag. 536. fol. * God called *Abraham* out of his own country, and made him travel from place to place, to make him thereby famous in the world, and to invite men by that means to enquire after his profession, his hopes, and his religion.' *Allix, Reflect. B. ii. c. 12.*

† *Gen. xxiv. 31, 50.* ‡ *Gen. xxxi. 19, 30.* § *Gen. xxxi. 24.*

*** Perhaps the Patriarch *Shem* himself. Vid. *Cumberland, de Leg. Patr.* p. 424, &c. *Bedford, Scrip. Chron.* p. 318. *Lightfoot, Misc.* 1010. The same opinion is maintained by many other authors mentioned by *Calmet, Dict. Vol. II.* p. 177. Comp. *Sharpe, Rise and Fall of Jerusalem,* p. 1, &c. and prolegom. in *Hyde opusc.* p. xxi.

the *Lord*, and readily pays a due regard to it †; the same sense of religion and virtue descends to his son ‡; from whence we learn, that this country was at that time far from arriving at that great degree of corruption, which it reached in a few generations after. In *Arabia* we find *Job*, and his three friends, all of regal dignity, as some say ||, entering into the deepest points of divinity, and agreed about the unity, omnipotence, and spirituality of God; the Justice of his providence, and many other fundamentals of Religion; as also mentioning a divine inspiration or revelation, as no very uncommon thing §. *Eliphaz* had his visions, and revelations ** as well as *Job*, though in a lower degree ††; and the latter expresses his faith in much stronger terms, than are elsewhere to be met with near his time; if according to the addition made to the seventy, he was the fifth from *Abraham* *, or according to others, contemporary either with him, or *Isaac* ‡‡. Though in truth, it is not very easy to settle either the date of that piece ‡, or the import of several

† *Gen. xx.*

‡ *Gen. xxvi. 10, 11.*

|| Vid. *Lxx.* in fin. *Job*, *Tobit* ii. 16. *Vulg.* *Lat.*—*Job* insultant *Reges*. Comp. Letter to the author of *Div. Leg.* 1765.

p. 57.

§ Vid. *Cleric.* in *Job* vi. 10. xxiii. 12. xxix. 4. xxxiii. 15. 23.

** C. iv. 12, 15, 16.

†† See *Patrick*, App. to par. on *Job*. p. 59.

* See *Calm.t.* *Dict.* or *Coffard's Observations*, p. 13. or *Heath*, p. 24. or *Findlay* against *Voltaire*, Pt. 3. § 3.

† *Jurieu*, *Crit. Hist.* Vol. I. p. 18. *Shuckford*. B. vii. p. 136, &c. *Selden de Jur. Nat.* &c. L. vii. c. 11, *Goguet*, Vol. I. *Dissert.* ii.

‡ That it could not be more ancient than the time of *Moser*
may

ral expressions in it. Some place it in the days of *David* or *Solomon* †, others bring it down as low as the captivity: nor are they without their reasons (m.)

How may be inferred from the mention of letters and writing, c. xiv. 23, 24. which had no existence before they were communicated to the *Israelites* from Mount *Sinai*, as is made highly probable by the authors referred to below, in note F. p. 153.

† *V. Vitringa* in *Jes. Proleg.* p. 9.

(m) See some of them in the *Five Letters* on *Inspir.* p. 99. and *Le Clerc* on *Job* i. 6, 8, 11, 22.—ii. 9.—vi. 10.—xi. 10, 22.—xxiii. 12.—xxvi. 12.—xxxii. 27.—xxxviii. 3.—xlii. 7. *Id.* *Sentim. de Theolog.* L. ix. p. 177, &c. et *Biblioth. Chois.* Tom. I. a. 1. Add *Chaldaismi* in indice ad *Cler. Comm.* Tom. IV. with *Findlay*, p. 433, 434. n.

The mixture of *Chaldee* in the composition which *Le Clerc* makes out in many instances, beside the *in pro im*, (*Peters's Crit. Diff.* p. 133.) seems of some moment towards determining it to be more modern than is usually imagined, and is, I apprehend, rather too slightly passed over both by the author of *Crit. Diff.* and those other eminent writers he produces; though *Le Clerc*, with his usual modesty, leaves the consequence from thence to the date of the book wholly undecided; nay, he himself assigns a reason why the latter is no necessary consequence from the former: *Jobus, nimurum, ad Euphratēm in Husitide habitavit, ubi lingua Chaldaica, aut Chaldaicæ ad finis obtinebat.* *Id. in c. xv. 13.*

As to the famous passage in c. xix. 25. on which he gives his judgment with more freedom, I must produce the conclusion, though somewhat of the longest, in his own words. *Jam ex ipsis totius hujus loci verbis satis liquere potest, Jobum de resurrectione sua non agere; quam nunquam veteres hic quesivissent, nisi pravis interpretationibus transversi acti fuissent; ut conjicere est ex Judæis, qui verba Hebraica sequuti, dogma, quod alioqui credunt, hinc excuspi posse non putarunt. Sed id ipsum, cum ex multis aliis locis, in quibus satis aperte Jobus ostendit statum animorum, post mortem, tunc ignotum fuisse, tum ex totius libri argumento facile colligitur. Quæritur in eo, cur qui non sunt deteriores aliis qui boni habentur et revera sunt, interdum inusitatis calamitatibus premantur; quod quomodo consentire queat cum justitia divina, nec Jobus, nec amici possunt comminisci; imo nec Deus ipse, ubi Jobum postea adloquitur, docet. Nimurum solutio problematis, et una consolatio, qua Jobi animus pacari poterat, peti debuit ex alterius vitae cognitione; quam si novissent Jobi amici, vetuissent eum usque adeo perturbari et lamentari: esse*

However, all seem to agree that, whoever was the author of it, it is built upon a real character; and that decorum is preserved so as generally to suit the notions in it to the patriarchal times* : and what religious notices might be gathered from this dramatick history, supposing it known in those times, may be seen at large in a judicious writer †.

To proceed: In *Chaldea* we meet with *Balaam*, a true prophet ‡; yet one who, from his own personal merit, had no particular pretensions to the word of God; since he so notoriously loved, and followed *the wages of unrighteousness*; and at length justly perished among the idolatrous *Midianites* ||; having taught them

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esse enim dixissent alind tempus præmiorum virtutis, idque expec-
tari ab eo debere, post hanc vitam mortalem; et eo majora
præmia relaturum, quo graviores calamitates constantius tyliisset:
quibus præmiis mala hujus vite Deus abunde esset pensatus.
Jobus ipse hoc ad animum revocasset, nec usque adeo restuasset.
Quod si talia eorum mentem non subiissent, Deus certe, si res
jam revelata erat, dixisset, monuisseque Jobum, sibi visum fuisse
tot malis ejus virtutem explorare; ut magis in ea ipse firmaretur,
aliique eam imitarentur, quibus similia contingent; nec esse
cur sibi duritiem & propemodum in justitiam exprobraret; se enim
non propter singularia quadam peccata passum esse eum tantis
& tot subitis malis optimi, sed ut ejus virtus magis eniteret,
exemplaque aliis esset; ceterum effecturum se ne hominem con-
stantiae suæ peniteret, æternis & eximiis in eum collatis præmiis.
Quæ oratio, (si rem tum pateficeret Deus) multa ejus summae
sapientiae convenientior erat, quam creatio Crocodili & Hippo-
potami, aliaque id genus; quæ Jobum quidem terrere potuerunt
divinæ potentiaz metu, sed solari vix potuerunt. Hæc qui ad
animum revocabunt, facile intelligent, nihil esse cur, veluti per
fidiculas, conemur resurrectionem & vitam æternam hinc extor-
quere. *Le Clerc's opinion is confirmed by Heath in loc. Add Durell, ib. p. 67, &c.—But compare Taylor, ib. c. 24.*

* See the *Theological Repository*, p. 70, &c. *and note* *ibid*.

† *Taylor, Scheme of Script. Div. c. 24.*

‡ *See Patrick. App. to Par. on Job, p. 60.*

|| *Numb. xxxi. 8.*

to seduce and corrupt those, whom he knew to be the chosen people of God †. Considering, I say, the character of this person, he seems to have had no particular title to the gift of prophecy (n); and therefore

† *Numb.* xxiv. 9. and xxxi. 16. *Mich.* vi. 5. *Rev.* ii. 14.

(n) Whatever might have been his former behaviour, it was certainly very bad in the whole of this affair; during which, he had the fullest revelations, and yet was continually disobeying, or endeavouring to defeat the intent of them; as may be seen in Bp. Butler's Sermon on that subject, and Shuckford's Connection, B. xii. p. 314, &c.

As to the particular manner of these revelations, we may, I think, suppose them to have been all alike made in vision, dream, or *trance*, [as our translators have interpreted one hereafter mentioned, and which some circumstances render very probable, notwithstanding what has been suggested to the contrary by Bp. Newton †] though from the narration it is equally difficult here, as in some other parts of scripture, to distinguish between real fact delivered in the most literal sense, and visionary, symbolic representations, such as occur in *Gen.* xv. 5, &c. i *Kings* xxii. 19. *Job* i. 6. ii. 1, &c. xxxviii. *Is.* vi. 1. xx. 2, 3. *Jer.* xiii. 1—7. xviii. 3, 4. xix. 1, 2. xxv. 15, 17. xxvii. 2, 3. *Ezek.* iii. 1, 2. iv. 6, &c. v. 1—4. xiii. 3, &c. *Hos.* i. 2, 3. iii. 1—3. [v. Pocock in loc.] *Zech.* i. 8. iii. 1. and perhaps *Gen.* iii. 21—24. and xxxii. 2, 24. vid. *Theodoret.* (though Dr. Clarke gives another interpretation of this last passage, Serm. xix. p. 126. Dubl. Ed.) and *Smith's Sel. Disc.* c. 6. To which we may add those visible appearances to St. Stephen and St. Paul, *Acts* viii. 55, 56. xxiii. 6, &c. [see *Elsner*, Comm. in *Matt.* v. 1. p. 38.] with that account of a star being seen by the wise men. *Matt.* ii. 9, 10. [*Elsner*, ib. p. 34, &c.] and perhaps the whole story of Christ's temptation in the wilderness, as is made very probable in *Farmer's Enquiry into its nature and design*, printed A. D. 1761. Comp. *Mason* on *Matt.* iv. 11. and *Jenning's Lectures*, B. I. c. vi. p. 365. or *Harewood*, Introd. to the N. Test. c. v. § p. 178. That of the *Angel* meeting *Balaam* in the way, seems to be thus explained by himself, *Numb.* xxiv. 3, 4. and 16. where he alludes to the very circumstance of his eyes being open, and yet he had no use of them without another opening by the Deity, c. xxii. 31. on which account they are said, with equal propriety, to have been before *shut*, c. xxiv. Nor is it a very easy supposition

† *Works*, v. 1. Disc. p. 76.

fore we may suppose that in those days it was not so uncommon a favour, but might be conferred on many

sition that instead of betraying the least token of surprise at hearing the ass speak, which was so natural to any person awake and in his perfect senses, he should persist in his blind fury, and make the following reply, more like one under the disorder attending a dream : *I would there were a sword in my hand, for now would I kill thee*, c. xxii. 29. Nor is the Angel's being thrice prevented from slaying *Balaam*, merely by the ass's turning away thus often, v. 33. less unaccountable ; if we are resolved to take the whole story literally. Nor does it seem probable that he, who was said to be in the retinue of the princes of *Moab*, Numb. xxii. 21. should at any time be so far separated from them in the way, as to give room for such a remarkable transaction, without their knowledge, as by the account it appears to be. ‘*Ita dico, in negotio Bileam, totum illud quod in via ei contigisse dicitur, & quomodo asina loquuta fuerit, in visione prophetica factum esse; quia in fine historie explicatur quod angelus Dei loquutus fuerit.*’ *Maimon.* Mor. Nevoch. P. ii. c. 42. To the same purpose *R. Levi Ben. Gersom*; and *Philo* seems to be of the same opinion, by his omission of this very remarkable circumstance, as is observed by *Shuckford*, B. xii. p. 315. Add *Memoirs of Lit. April 1710*, p. 14. and *Jortin’s Dissertations*, Diss. v. p. 189. *Leibnitz* endeavours to prove the same thing in his history of *Balaam*, Gen. Dift. Vol. VI. p. 678. Which, I think, is pretty clear in his case, though some of those others abovementioned may perhaps belong to that species of revelation by *action*, which is explained at large, in *Div. Leg.* B. iv. sect. 4. and B. vi. sect. 5. Nor does the reference made to this part of *Balaam’s* history by St. Peter determine any thing with regard to the literal sense of the passage before us ; or exclude the prophetick scenery supposed ; since it is observed to be merely a translation from an Hebrew writer of uncertain authority, who puts words into the ass’s mouth that are not mentioned in the original account of *Moses*. See *Benson* on 2 Pet. ii. 16. However, we may safely conclude with *Jortin*, that ‘since *Balaam* relates it as a fact, and *Moses* recorded it as *Balaam* gave it ; and other prophets have described their visions like real facts, and the moral use and application is the same either way ; it is no wonder that St. Peter, mentioning the story, did not meddle with the distinction between real and visionary transactions, which concerned not his purpose in the least.’ *ib.* p. 191.

many others likewise, in other parts of the world *, whose history is not delivered down to us †: And upon the whole, it seems probable that, as *in every nation, those who feared God and worked righteousness, were accepted of him* ‡, so he was pleased to manifest himself, wherever men were disposed to make a proper use of that manifestation; and in such time, manner, and degree, as would best answer the ends of his good providence, and most effectually promote the interest of religion.

Not to insist upon the numberless traditions of supernatural appearances, and the common belief of them, all over the world ||; which notion can hardly be supposed to have arisen at first without a good foundation, though numberless impostures (which yet are ever imitations of something real, and almost a natural consequence of its reality §) have indeed render'd all reports of that kind, for these many ages, very suspicious.

But

* See *Judg.* vii. 13, &c. and notes below.

† Vid. *Cleric.* Prolegom. Diff. iii. 7. 2. de Script. Pent. p. 36.

‡ *Acts* x. 35.

|| See *Patrick* on *Numb.* xxii. 9. Append. to *Job*, p. 60, &c. *Huet.* Quæst. *Alnetan.* c. 2. n. 1, 2. *Shuckford*, B. i. p. 47.

§ See *Adams*'s judicious answer to *Hume's Essay on Miracles*, p. 110. 111. Good and evil angels under some former dispensations of religion might appear and act in a sensible manner: but under the present dispensation they may for wise reasons (particularly, because we are now sufficiently instructed in their nature and agency) be wholly invisible; nor may we be capable of distinguishing their secret internal impressions from the suggestions of our own minds; or the external, kind assistances of good angels, or the malicious injuries of evil angels, from the common course of providence. *Taylor's Scheme of Script.* Div. c. 12.

But to proceed. When it had pleased God to adopt *Abraham*, and part of his posterity in a peculiar manner, and to establish his *Covenant* with them†; we find all possible care and condescension used, to train them up by degrees, in suitable nations of their Creator; a frequent correspondence held with them; new promises daily given; in order to strengthen and confirm their faith, and fix their dependence on the God of heaven. He reveals himself to *Isaac* and *Rebecca*; and foretells the condition of their two sons‡; renews the promise made to *Abraham**; blesses his son *Isaac*; miraculously increases his substance; and soon makes him the envy of the neighbouring princes|||. He converses in the same manner with *Jacob*; and repeats the same promise|||; gives him the right of primogeniture; engages to be with him, and keep him, in all places whither he should go|||. This he confirms by many extraordinary blessings; and frequent appearances§; vouchsafing to talk with him face to face**; to bestow all kinds of riches on him; and strike the terror of him into all the cities round about

† Rom. ix. 5.

‡ Gen. xxi. 22, 23. From this circumstance of *Rebecca's* going to enquire of the Lord, Leland infers, that there was at that time in Canaan a prophet or prophets distinct from *Abraham* and *Isaac*, to whom persons might have recourse to know the will of God. Advantage, &c. of Rev. Vol. I. Pt. i. c. 2. p. 78. n.

* Gen. xxvi. 24. || Gen. xii. 13. 14. || Gen. xxviii. 13, 14.

|| Gen. xxviii. 15. § Gen. xxxii. 1. xxxv. 1, 9. ** Gen. xxxii. 29.

about ††. And yet we find all this little enough to keep up, even in Jacob, a tolerable sense of duty, and dependence on his God: After the first vision he is surprised, and hesitates; and seems to make a kind of stipulation with his Maker. *If, says he, God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God* ††: that is, if he will preserve and prosper me in my undertakings, he shall be my God, rather than any other: And it appears not to have been till after many such revelations, and deliverances, and his being also reminded of them |||; that he set himself, in earnest, to reform the religion of his own family, by driving out all strange gods*. *Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean; and change your garments, and let us arise, and go up to Bethel; And I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went* †.

Thus

* Gen. xxxv. 5. †† Gen. xxviii. 21, 22. See *Le Clerc* on the place. ||| ch. xxxv. 1.

* ch. xxxv. 2, 3.

† The idolatry here mentioned, may perhaps be thought chiefly to relate to the Schechemite women in Jacob's household, Gen. xxxiv. 29. See Shuckford, B. vii. p. 164. In support of which opinion it may be observed, that the words Elohi hannekar, above rendered *strange gods*, more properly signify the *gods of the stranger*. Deos alienigenæ. Vulg. L. However, that Jacob himself had yet but very imperfect notions of the Deity, particularly

Thus was God obliged to treat, even with the *Patriarchs* themselves, by way of positive *Covenant*, and express compact; to promise to be their God, it

ly of his *Omnipresence*, is observed by *Le Clerc* on *Gen. xxviii.* 16. and to the same purpose *Cyrill. Alex. L. iv. p. 115.* there cited. And that the sense of religion was not great among his sons, appears from their behaviour to the *Shechemites*, and from so many of them conspiring the destruction of the most innocent and amiable *Joseph*.

Having been informed, that the above account of *Jacob's Vow* has been by some judged too degrading; I shall here set down the observation made on it by an ingenious friend Dr. *Taylor*. I am persuaded, translators and critics have not done justice to the good old Patriarch. His vow consists of two parts. I. A recapitulation of the promise made to him in the preceding vision [*Gen. xviii. 13, 14, 15.*] v. 20, 21. II. The subject matter of the vow which he grounded upon it, v. 22. The recapitulation of the promise runs thus. *Seeing [δε]** God will be with me, [I] and will keep me in the way wherein I go, [I] and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, [I] and I shall return again to my father's house in peace (or in prosperous circumstances) [I] and seeing the Lord will be my God; II. The vow follows v. 22. [I] and, *Therefore*† this stone which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house [a place dedicated to his worship] and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee.'

* This particle δε, if, is not here conditional, but causal, quoniam, quandoquidem; as *Gen. xxiii. 13. Numb. xxii. 20. Judg. xi. 9. Jer. xxiii. 38. Ezek. xxxv. 6, &c.* See *Noldius*.

† In a series of copulatives the last assumes a signification different from the preceding copulatives. So *Gen. xxv. 34.* [I] and *Esau* did eat and drink, [I] and rose up, [I] and went his way: [I and] thus *Esau* despised his birth-right. And in the Greek Epigram,

Δελος Επιεικης γυμνης, και τωρ' αναπογος,
Και μινεις Ιερος, ΚΑΙ φιλος αδειοτοις.

Here, I presume, the last και is to be rendered by *tamen, verumtamen, nihilominus*. So in this place under consideration, the last [I] and, which precedes the vow, should be rendered *then, or therefore*. But our translators have given it this sense, not before the vow, but before the last article of the recapitulation of the promise;

if they would be his people ; to give them a portion of present temporal blessings, as introductory to, and an earnest of future*, spiritual ones; and engage them in his service by immediate visible rewards ; till they could be led on to higher views ; and were prepared, by the bringing in of a better hope, to draw nigh unto him. And we may observe what care was always taken, to suit his dispensations to the state of the world, and introduce each as soon as it was wanted, and in such a way as was most necessary, to correct disorders and reform abuses, as they arose ; and thereby ever keep up a face of religion ; and gradually increase the substance of it : in the same manner, as Providence always took care to impart to mankind, so much knowledge of the world, the ways of cultivating it, and arts of living, as was then requisite to make life a blessing to them ; though their knowledge of both kinds, was neither of so refined a nature, nor so high a degree, as it must

* That from the beginning of the world each patriarchal covenant, or blessing, was to be understood as a *pledge* of other distant and superior ones, may be seen in Lord Barrington's *Essay on the several Dispensations of God*, p. 20, 24, 25, 59, 62, 69.

mise ; and so have not done justice to the good old Patriarch's character. I have looked into Pagnin's interlineary version, and find that the Latin translation will enable you to form a just idea of this criticism. Only observe, that *Montanus*, his revisor and corrector, has printed the *et* before the last article of the recapitulation, which we render *then*, in the *Italic* character ; intimating, I suppose, that the copulative there is redundant ; in order the better to make out the common way of interpreting the place ; but this does violence to the original, and aggravates the mistake. Comp. *Purver on Gen. xxviii. 21.*

must reach, by the experience and improvements of after-ages.

Mankind were scarcely got out of their *Childhood* yet, with regard to what may be called the *theory* of *religion*; and notwithstanding there might always be some extraordinary persons, who had a more enlarged prospect of things, and entertained more worthy sentiments of the divine Providence, such as *Enoch, Noah, Abraham*; yet these were far superior to the times in which they lived; and we have reason to think that the generality, both in this, and some later ages, extended their views no farther than the present life, and its conveniences*: and though from the confused remains of ancient tradition, they acknowledged some power above them; and frequently applied thither for direction in affairs; yet it was in the petty affairs of this world only; and their belief and worship were framed accordingly. How many of these superior powers there might be,

or

* This seems to have been the case even with *Abraham* himself for some time, who upon having an extraordinary promise made to him by God in a vision, Gen. xv. 1. *Fear not, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward;* rises no higher in his answer, than only to request an heir for his substance, v. 2, 3. *And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?* *And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed; and lo, one born in my house is mine heir.*—Unless this be interpreted in the same sense with that general earnest desire of posterity so common in his time, and for which *Allix* has endeavoured to account, from the no less common expectation entertained by each particular family of having the *Messiah* descend from them, [Reflect. Pt. i. c. xv, &c.] and which might therefore well be included in *Abraham's* request.

or how far their supposed influence might reach, they knew not: uncertain whether there was one supreme Governor of the whole world, or many co-ordinate powers, presiding over each country*, climate or particular place†; gods of the *hills*, and of the *valleys*, as they were termed in later times‡; they thought, the more of these they could engage in their interest, the better; and therefore wherever they came, like the *Samaritans*, they sought the manner of *the God of the land*; and served him together with their own gods||. Thus was the world running apace into idolatry, and ready to lose all proper ideas of the true God, and his worship; had he not been pleased to interpose, and take effectual care to preserve these pure in some one nation; to be kept apart from the common contagion, and made, as it were, the repository of true religion; and a channel to convey it to the rest of mankind; as soon, and in as high a degree, as they should become capable of receiving it.

To this purpose, he makes way for the removal of *Jacob* and his family, to one of the most improved and polished parts of the world at that time; and introduces them into it, in so advantageous a manner, as to give them opportunity of imparting somewhat of the true religion, with advantage, to the most considerable families in it §; and without any danger

* *2 Kings xviii. 34, 35.* † See *Numb. xxiii. 13, 27.*

‡ *1 Kings xx. 23, 28.* Vid. *Galmet.* || *2 Kings xvii. 33.*

§ It is very apparent from the *Mosaic* history, that the Hebrews

ger of sharing in those corruptions which were getting ground there ||. They are placed by themselves in a fruitful part of *Egypt*, bordering on that country out of which they had come, and into which they were at length to return*. Here they multiply exceedingly; yet by their very occupation § are kept a separate people;

brews were never held in such detestation or abhorrence by the Egyptians, but that they would freely converse, though they might not eat bread with them. *Owen*, B. L. f. 8. And ‘when they departed out of Egypt we are expressly told, that a great multitude went also with them, who are all with good reason supposed to have been so many proselytes to their religion; as *Strabo* testifies. *Geogr.* L. 16.’

|| ‘Although the *Egyptian* priests were not, in my humble opinion, now idolaters; yet God, well knowing the infinity of wealth now pouring in upon them, and foreseeing the consequent increasing corruptions, always attendant upon great national wealth; kindly provided against them, by placing the wisest and best man in the world (*Joseph*) guardian of that people in general; and at the same time, the high favourite of their King, and ally of their priests, and continuing him in those characters for a long train of years; which to my thinking, was a most adorable scheme to recover, promote, preserve, and if possible, perpetuate, their piety, virtue, and wisdom.’ *Rev. Exam. Delaney*, Vol. III. c. 9. p. 194.—‘I am certain, they were not idolaters when *Joseph* presided in *Egypt*; nor were they such gross idolaters, even when the children of *Israel* came out of *Egypt*; for leeks and onions were then a favourite food—although afterwards—they came to be deified.’ *ib.* 199.

* *Pyle Paraphr. on Gen. xlviij. 4.*

§ See *Gen. xlvi. 33, 34.* ‘And here we cannot but admire his wisdom who found out and evacuated a land for them, I mean that of *Goshen* in every respect suitable to the purpose: a land where they might live distinct by themselves, and yet daily converse with the most celebrated nation then upon earth; a land lately deserted by the *Shepherd Kings*, and their subjects, and therefore well adapted for the reception of *Shepherds* again. Nor can we less admire his goodness, who when he had spied out this land for them, was pleased to detach from his country and kindred another person of eminent qualities and great piety, and to send him, even *Joseph*,—as a kind of ambassador before them, to procure an interest for their settlement in it.’ *Owen*, B. L. f. 8.

people; and rendered more averse to the manners and religion of their neighbours, by a long and severe oppression: Which might at first have been occasioned by their opposition to the growing idolatry †; and refusal to incorporate themselves with that infected nation: and the continuance of it became very necessary afterwards, both to keep up that opposition; and to inure them to restraint and government: But that it might have the effects intended, yet not proceed so far as to reduce them to an entire subjection, and conformity to that more potent people, through a despair of any deliverance; the precise time of this their trial was foretold to *Abraham* ‡; and as soon as it had been accomplished, and they had cried for help to their God §; they are brought back, in as wonderful a way as they had been sent thither; which also was foretold to *Jacob* §; and repeated by *Joseph* *; all the circumstances whereof are at large related in their history; and I may add, with all those characters of truth and perfect consistency, which might be shewn to receive new confirmation, from every such attempt to burlesque and expose it, as is made by a late profligate writer ††. To proceed,

The God of *Israel* having at length magnified himself over the *Egyptians* and their gods |||, by a series of

† See *Chandler*, Vind. O. T. pag. 487. and *Owen*, ib.

‡ *Act*s vii. 6. || *Exod*. ii. 23. § *Gen*. xlvi. 4. and xlviii. 21.

* *Gen*. l. 24, 25.

†† *Moral Philosopher*, Introd. to Vol. III.

||| Perhaps by destroying all their images or temples. Vid. *Cleric. & Patr.* in *Exod*. xii. 12. Comp. *Numb*. xxxiii. 4. Paraphr.

of the most astonishing miracles ; and rescued his people from them, in such a manner as must strike the utmost terror into the whole land ; and spread his name much farther, by means of the many strangers that used to travel thither †, in order to be acquainted with the history of that famous nation, from whom the greatest part of the world derived their policy and religion || : Having thus, made his name great among the heathens § ; and worked so conspicuous a deliverance for his chosen people, as might, one would think, have been sufficient to engage them for ever in his service ; yet all this proving ineffectual to correct their proneness to idolatry, he is obliged to defer their entrance into the promised land for some time, and proceeds to instruct and exercise them in the wilderness ; he patiently exhorts, and urges them to their duty, and warns them against all the vices of the people round about them : Gives them statutes, and judgments, though not so perfect as they would have been

raphr. *Jonath.* in loc. & *2 Sam.* vii. 23. The reason of which may be gathered from note (r) below p. 98. Perhaps by exerting his power upon them in such a manner as served equally to demonstrate the nullity of the gods they worshipped, as to punish the crimes they had been guilty of in consequence of that worship. See this particularised in Dr. *Owen's Intent and Propr. of Script. Mir.* p. 37, &c. & *B. L. f. 10.*

† See the notes below, with *Chandler's Vindication of the hist. of the O. T.* Part ii. p. 464. &c. and p. 499.

|| Vid. *Diod. Sic.* L. i. *Herodot.* L. ii. c. 43, &c. et *Witſii Egypt.* L. iii. c. 13. 16.

§ That this remarkable punishment of the *Egyptians* was inflicted in great goodness to the generality of that nation themselves on the whole, as well as to the neighbouring nations round them, from whom they derived most of their grossest superstitions, may be seen at large in *Le Clerc on Psal. cxxxvi. 10—17.*

been were the subjects of them capable of receiving better, yet much more excellent and righteous than those of any other nation * ; and such as were to be a model to the rest of the world † ; sends his *angel before them, to keep them in the way* ; takes upon himself the civil government of them ; and by his presence guides, guards, and directs them in all their undertakings. He conducts them through the neighbouring nations, with repeated signs and wonders (o) ; and continues to try and discipline them, till either they were cured of those corruptions that had been contracted in *Egypt*, or the most incurable part of that generation were cut off ‡ ;—till they were at length tolerably well attached to his government, and established in his worship ;—till they were fit and able to possess the promised land, to which they had an original right

* Deut. iv. 8.

† Vid. Joseph. contr. Ap. Selden de Jur. Gent. &c. passim. Euseb. Praep. Ev. L. ix. c. 27.

(o) Numb. xiv. 14. *They have heard that thou, Lord, art among this people, that thou, Lord, art seen face to face, and thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them by day-time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night ; v. 15.—The nations have heard the fame of thee.* Add Deut. ii. 25. Josh. ii. 10. 1 Sam. iv. 8.—vi. 6. which places, by the way, furnish us with an answer to that objection of the Mor. Phil. Vol. III. p. 183. that ‘ had God given any such—authority to the Israelites, as is hereafter mentioned—he would have let the people of Palestine know it, and in some authentic way or other assured them, that he had given away their country to strangers and foreigners ; and that if they did not leave the land, and give up all their natural lawful possessions, rights, and properties, peaceably and without opposition, they must be all cut to pieces, men, women, and children :’ though this was not the truth of the case, of which more below. See S. Brown’s Answ. to Christ. as old, &c. p. 373, 374.

‡ Numb. xxvi. 65.

right †;—and till the present inhabitants were fully ripe for destruction *. At their entrance into it, he gives a summary recital of their former laws, to this new generation † with more such ordinances ‡, both of a ceremonial and moral kind, as were best suited to their present temper and circumstances ; and adapted every way to prevent the dangers, and correct the ir-

regu-

† This nation, when they demanded admission into Canaan, might have pleaded the possession of their ancestors for three successive generations :—that they were the first possessors of some parts, [Gen. xii. 6, xiii. 3, 9, &c.]—that they had built altars, [xii. 7. xxxiii. 20.] and dug several wells in other parts of it ; [xxi. 25. xxvi. 18, &c.] and that they had purchased more than one place in that country [xxiii. 16, 17. xxxiii. 19.] On the other hand, the ancient inhabitants from the flood could have insisted on no other title than *Prescription* : and farther, however just their plea might have been, we are assured that they had absolutely forfeited it by their notorious violation of the law of nature. Deut. xx. 18, &c. Durell, App. to Parallel Prophecies of Jacob and Moses, p. 160. Another ingenious Author carries up the right of this people much higher. ‘We are told that the nations of the earth had an inheritance assigned them, and that it was by Divine appointment. Moreover, that at the general dispersion it pleased God to have a provident regard for a nation which was to come, even for the sons of Israel ; and in the distribution of countries, had set bounds to other families, that they should not trespass on the inheritance of Jacob, which was his own portion. Thus limits were prescribed according to the necessities of a people to come, and to the space which would be requisite for their numbers to inhabit. In other words, the land of Canaan was excepted out of the general partition. This space was usurped by the people who gave name to it. They knew the Divine allotment, yet wilfully transgressed : on which account they brought themselves and their posterity under the severest curse, and justified every thing which they afterward suffered for their rebellion : though at the time of their punishment this their guilt was accumulated with additional wickedness and apostacy.’ Bryant’s Enquiries into some parts of Ancient Hist. p. 262. Id. Analysis, v. 3. p. 206, &c. and below p. 105. Comp. Lookup Erron. Translat. p. 57.—61.

* Gen. xv. 16. † Pyle Paraphr. on Deut. p. 2.

‡ Deut. i. 3, 5, 27, 31. Neb. ix. 14.

regularities, to which they became continually liable (*p*) ; as well as to prefigure, and by degrees prepare them for* a more perfect dispensation under the *Messiah*. The moral part breathed nothing but equity, and benevolence ; debarring all kinds of cruelty and oppression, by reminding them of their late heavy sufferings in that respect : it inculcated the greatest humanity, not only towards each other, but likewise toward strangers, servants, enemies ; and even the beasts

(*p*) See Dr. Burnet's *B. Lect.* p. 541. fol. and the author of *Dio. Leg.* Vol. II. B. iv. sect. 6. 'It seems not to have been God's intention at first to lay upon them such numbers of ceremonies ; for it was only after the commission of the sin of the golden calf, that God laid on them that heavy and troublesome yoke, on purpose to employ all their time, and so keep them from falling into idolatry again.' *Allix, Reflect.* p. 203. *Ea est indoles vulgi, præsertim apud gentes idolatriæ deditas, ut a se numen coli satis studiose non putet, nisi operoso cultu id prosequatur ; cui indoli Moses sese adtemperavit.* At si cum doctioribus hominibus, quales Christo in terras delapsi plurimi erant, res ei fuisset, nihil aliud docuisse, quam quod Servator & apostoli discipulis suis inculcavere.—*Cleric. in Ex. xxv. 31. Comp. Spencer de Leg. Heb. L. i. c. 4. sect. 4. Trigland de Orig. et Caus. Rit. Mos. Burnet de Fid. & Off. p. 17. from Jer. vii. 22, 23.* [on the other side, see *Shuckford*, Vol. III. p. 151.] If this be a true account of the *Jewish* institution, then though it really was, what it is termed, a *yoke of bondage*, yet nevertheless it might well be imposed by God himself, as being the fittest thing for the people to whom, and the times in which it was delivered, and consequently not unworthy of having God for its author ; as a licentious modern writer would insinuate, *Morgan, moral Philosopher*, Vol. I. p. 51, &c.

The various wise and good ends served in each part of the *Hebrew Ritual*, may be seen in *Lowman, Rational. pass.* That it could not have higher *sanctions* because it was only a ritual, or have been more *perfect*, consistently with the chief of these ends, viz. its preparing men for a better state of religion under the *Messiah*, vid. *ibid. Part iii. c. 2, 3. Comp. Durell's Dissert. on the Mosaic Inst. App. to Parall. Proph. of Jacob and Moses.*

* See Burnet's *Boyle's Lect.* fol. 547. or *Berriman, Serm. xxiii. or Witsius, Egypt. L. iii. c. 14. sect. 17.*

beasts of the field†. The ceremonial parts were solemn and splendid †, apt to engage and fix the attention of a people, whose heart was gross; fitted to inspire them with an awful reverence for the whole; and withdraw their affections, from the pomp and pageantry of idol worship; which had so very surprisingly bewitched the world about that time. It was filled with operose, magnificent rites, to keep them duly employed and attached to it; and so far mixed and incorporated with their civil polity, that the same things were duties of religion, and acts of state; and the service of God became the great business, as well as entertainment of their lives (q).

Nor

† *Exod.* xxii. 21,—27. and xxxiii. 5, 6, 9,—12, *Deut.* v. 14. x. 18. xiv. 21. xvi. 11. and xxii. 1,—4, 6, 7, xxiii. 7. xxiv. 10, &c. xxv. 1,—4. xxvi. 12. xxvii. 19. *Lev.* xix. 9, 10, 23,—37. and xxv. 35,—38. See *Leland's Answ. to Christ. as old*, &c. V. II. p. 447, &c. *Le Clerc on Gen.* viii. 9, 10. *Philo, de charitate. Joseph. contr. Ap.* L. ii. So utterly false and slanderous is the following assertion of *Ld. Bolingbroke*, [Works, Vol. III. p. 296] ‘The first principles and the whole tenor of the Jewish laws took them out of all moral obligations to the rest of mankind.’—

† *Welsley, Scheme of Prov.* p. 70, &c. Agreement of the Customs between the *East-Indians*, and the *Jews*, art. 3. p. 23.

(q) See *Univers. Hist.* p. 694. *Edwards's Survey*, Vol. I. p. 242, 255, &c. or *Limborch, Amic. Collat.* p. 317.

We may add, that the ceremonial part itself might have a moral view, representing several duties to them in that emblematical, and parabolic way, which was well known, and commonly made use of in those times. See instances in *Burnet's B. Lect.* p. 542. fol.

Other rites were instituted in *Commemoration* of great and signal events, and extraordinary acts of providence towards their nation; the keeping up a constant remembrance of which could not but be of great use for preserving the love and worship of God amongst them; for awakening their gratitude, and engaging their dutiful obedience. *Leland, Div. Auth. of the O. and N. T.* asserted against the *Moral Philos.* p. 50.

Nor

Nor was this institution wholly confined to the *Jews*. The law itself was given to strangers (§), and those that accompanied them from *Egypt*; the *Covenant* was made with all the *Gentiles*, that should hereafter become proselytes to their religion (†); and sufficient care was taken, to communicate it to them; as we shall see presently.

And though the children of *Israel* were not allowed to have any commerce with the *Seven Nations*; but were commanded to destroy them, and possess themselves of their country; on their refusing a submission, and rejecting offers of peace (‡): yet, in order to prevent their imagining themselves to be the only favourites of Heaven, and learning to despise, and hate the rest of mankind; (as they were but too apt to do, and which, to a people under their circumstances, was in some measure unavoidable) they were told,

Nor were the public *feasts*, in which they were all obliged to meet at one place, of less use; by keeping them united together in one body politic. *Le Clerc* on *Exod.* v. 3. and xxiii. 14.

Of the great use of the *jubilee* for the same end. *Id.* in *Lev.* xxv. 10. p. 318.

(§) *Deut.* xxix. 11. xxxi. 12. *Josh.* viii. 33, 35. *Exod.* xii. 19, 49.

(†) *Deut.* xxix. 14, 15. *Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath; but with him that standeth here with us this day before the Lord, and also with him that is not here with us this day.* See *Lev.* xxiv. 22. and *Jenkin*, Vol. I. p. 60,—65. or *Worthington's Essay*, p. 130.

(‡) *Deut.* xx. 10, &c. *Josh.* ii. 12. xi. 19, 20. xvi. 10. xvii. 13. See *Univ. Hist.* p. 531. 532. note I. *Owen*, B. L. f. 12. n. p. *Edwards's Survey*, p. 355, &c. *Patrick* on *Ex.* xxiii. 32. *Shuckford Connection*, Vol. III. B. xii. p. 433, &c. *Selden De Jur. Nat.* L. vi. c. 14. *Findlay*, *Answ. to Voltaire*, p. 130, &c.

told, at the same time, that it was for the incorrigible wickedness of these nations*, (who of all others had been favoured with the best means of information, viz. from the examples of so many eminent men placed amongst them, and from the judgments of God so remarkably set before them†) that the Lord had driven them out; as he would do *them* also, if they followed their steps ‡; that if any of these people remained long unsubdued, they would infallibly prove a snare to them ||; and that therefore, as well for their own security, as in execution of the divine vengeance, they were obliged to extirpate them; at least the present generation §; or to destroy their *national polity* **; and at the same time, were sufficiently warned to avoid their crimes. They were likewise often reminded of their own perverseness, and ingratitude ††; and assured that it was not for their own sakes, that they were thus distinguished †††; for they had always been a stiff-necked, and rebellious people; but in regard to the promise made to

their

* *Lev.* xviii. 24, 25. and xx. 23. See *Leland against Christ. as old, &c.* Vol. II. p. 429, &c. ‘The destruction of these nations was more particularly severe, because their idolatry was of the grossest nature; for they offered up their enemies in sacrifice, and even their own sons and daughters unto *Moleeb.*’ *Taylor’s Essay on the Beauty of the Divine Oeconomy.* p. 27.

† See *Jenkin*, Vol. I. p. 56, 57. and 77, 78.

‡ *Deut.* viii. 19, 20. || *Ex.* xxxiv. 12. *Josb.* xxiii. 13.

§ *Josb.* xvi. 10. *Judg.* i. 25. xxviii. 35. *1 Kings* ix. 20, 21.

¶ *Sam.* xi. 12. 2 *Chron.* viii. 7, 8. See *Jenkin*, Vol. I. p. 71, 72.

** *Sykes, Connect. of Nat. and Rev. Rel.* c. xiii. p. 332, &c.

†† *Deut.* ix. 4,—24. †† *Ib.* ix. 6, 7, &c.

their forefathers, for the sake of some righteous men amongst them; and on account of the superior wickedness of these nations (*r*);—that the great intent of God was to raise up, and separate a people, which should manifest his power to the heathen; and make his name known through the earth*; which were to be a *kingdom of priests* (*§*), preachers of righteousness, and publishers of true religion, over the world: that this design had taken place before they were born, and would be carried on, either by their obedience, or their disobedience; who were to be examples to all others, both of the *goodness, and severity of God*†. And accordingly, in the remainder of their history, both under their *judges* and their *kings*, we find them

frē-

(*r*) That this was such as justly deserved exemplary punishment, from the supreme Governor of the world, and that it might with equal justice be inflicted by such persons as received an express, clear commission from him for that purpose, is shewn at large in *Lowman's Diff. on the civil governm. of the Hebrews*, c. i. p. 13, &c. and c. xii. p. 221, &c. or *S. Browne*, p. 366, &c. Comp. *Bryant's Observations*, p. 265, &c.

Concerning the great propriety of punishing them by the *sword* of the *Israelites*, rather than any other way; both for the better admonition of the *Israelites* themselves, and of their heathen neighbours; since the credit of the gods of every nation so greatly depended on the fate of war, see *Jenkin*, Vol. I. p. 72. *Lowman*, ib. p. 228, &c. *Univers. Hist.* p. 893. vol. not. T. ad. fin. *Jackson's Remarks on Christ. as old*, &c. p. 51.

Many instances of this persuasion occur as low as *Constantine*; to which purpose we have a remarkable speech of *Licinius* in *Euseb. De vit. Conf.* c. v. And to which we may add, that as the people in those times did not in the least dispute the reality of each others deities, no kind of miracles but such as implied superior power, could induce any of them to quit their own, for other objects of religious worship. Comp. *1 Kings xx, 23,—28.*

2 Kings xviii. 34, &c.

* *Ezek. xxxvi. 22, 23.* (*§*) *Exod. xix. 6.*

† *Deut. xxx, xxxi, xxxii.* *Rom. xi. 22.*

frequently rebelling, and as frequently punished for it ; so soon as they repent, they are restored to favour ; when they relapse, they are again chastised* ; all along alternately finning and suffering ; immediate and visible judgments attending each revolt ; either oppression in their own, or slavery in foreign countries ; till the last great captivity in *Babylon* quite cured them of their favourite, predominant vice *Idolatry* ; to which they had been before so unaccountably (s) addicted.

But

* *Judg.* iii. 8, 12. iv. 2. vi. 1. xiii. 1. *1 Sam.* xii. 9, 10, &c. The propriety of these dispensations, the last great captivity in particular, is well illustrated in *Taylor's Scheme of Script.* Div. c. 32.

(s) *Le Clerc* attempts to give some account of this in his note on *2 Kings* xi. 11. which well deserves to be considered. Comp. *Patrick* on *Judg.* ii. 12. [and *1 Sam.* viii. 20. where they are so surprisingly urgent for a *king* on the same principle.] ‘ I can account for it (says an useful writer*) upon no other consideration, but that of the exceeding great temptations there are in all religions, that are a mere mixture of *civil policy* and *priestcraft*, dressed up with all the artifices of external pomp, splendor, and amusement, and made agreeable to the corrupt and vicious inclinations of men. Such no doubt was the *Heathen worship*, to which that of the *golden calf* bore too near a resemblance, both in its original and progress. And when we turn our thoughts to those ages and nations of the world, that are called *Christian*, [and supposed to be under far happier advantages of light and knowledge, than ever the *Jewish church* was,] and observe to what extravagances both of notions and practices, the *Romish communion* hath for so long a time, and by the like means, influenced the majority of the nations round, it will, I conceive, much abate the wonder arising from this matter, considered in relation to the church of *Israel*.²

The parallel instance above mentioned, affords likewise a good illustration of the *degree* of their corruption. For that this crime of the *Israelites* did not consist in their absolute rejection of the true God, but only in joining the worship of other gods, and taking

* *Pyle*, Pref. to Paraph. on the O. T. Vol. IV.

But all this while the rest of the world reap the same benefit by them, whether they keep their law, and prosper ; or disobey it, and are in distress. One would naturally suppose, that they must partake of the improvements of the *Jew's* religion in some degree, as well as these partook of their corruptions ; which appears to have been the case in fact : And as it is observed of *Greece*, that when it was subdued by the *Romans*, itself subdued its conquerors, softened their savage temper, and refined their manners ; and afterwards of the *Romans* themselves, that wherever they conquered, they in some respect or other civilized the world* : So may it with much greater justice be said of the *Jews*, that they improved, and reformed the religion of every people, who were either brought under subjection to them, or into whose hands

taking them into communion with him, is made plain by Bp. *Warburton*. ‘ So strong was this universal prejudice of *intercommunity*, that all the provisions of the law could not keep those people from running into the error. For their frequent defection into idolatry, till after the *Babylonish* captivity, was no other than the joining foreign worship to that of the God of *Israel*. It is a vulgar error to imagine this consisted in renouncing the religion delivered to them by *Moses*, as a false one ; they all along held it to be true ; but, deluded by the prejudice of this *intercommunity*, they were apt to regard the God of *Israel*, only as a local, tutelary Deity.’ *Div. Leg.* B. ii. sect. 6. Add B. v. sect. 2. See also *Jurieu*, *Crit. Hist.* Vol. II. pt. iii. c. 9. *Mede's* *Apost.* of the latter times, c. x. p. 651. *Le Clerc* on *Acts* vii. 42. *Tenison* of *Idolatry*, C. vi. p. 110. As to the *intercommunity* among the Heathens, see *Macrobius*. L. iii. c. 9. *De evocandis diis tutelar.*

* This is acknowledged on some occasions by *Tacitus* himself amidst his most satirical censures of the *Roman* policy ; *Seqvens hiems saluberrimis consiliis absumpta, ut homines dispersi, et rudes quiete et otio per voluptates affuescerent, &c.* *Vit. Agric.*

hands they fell †: Who were witnesses of the power, and justice of their God, either in distinguishing them by express rewards, for their adhering to him †; or as remarkably punishing them, for deserting him; and who seem to be well acquainted with the intent of these his dispensations (t); especially, when they were made the instruments thereof ||; and

on

† Atque utinam nunquam Judæa subacta fuisset.

Pompeii bellis, imperioque Titi:

Latius excise peltis contagia serpunt,

Victoresque suos natio victa premit. *Rutil. Itiner.* v. 398.

‡ This we find them publickly declaring, on the miraculous preservation of *Hezekiah* and his people from the army of the *Affrians*, 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 23. *And many brought gifts unto the Lord to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah, so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from henceforth.*

(t) 1 *Sam.* iv. 8. *Rom.* ix. 17. This may be gathered from the case of the men of *Jericho* in particular, who were fully informed of the several miracles worked in favour of the *Israelites*, *Josh.* ii. 9, 10. and who must have had sufficient warning of God's design therein, either from common fame, or more probably by express revelation; for despising of which they are termed *disobedient* by St. Peter, 1 *Ep.* iii. 20. Comp. *Heb.* xi. 31. See *Shuckford*, Vol. III. B. xii. p. 403, &c. And that the same thing might be done afterwards, in many other instances (as in the following note) by their own prophets, (who were sent to the nations on that very account,) is no less probable; as may be seen in the notes a little below; which gives a farther answer to the *Moral Philosopher's* objection mentioned, p. 87. note (o).

|| *Jer.* i. 7. *All that found them have devoured them; and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the Lord, the habitation of justice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers. The Lord thy God (says Nebuzaradan to Jeremiah) hath pronounced this evil upon this place. Now the Lord hath brought it, and done according as he hath said: because ye have sinned against the Lord, and have not obeyed his voice; therefore this thing is come upon you.* *Jer.* xl. 2, 3. *Am I now come up without the Lord against this place to destroy it? The Lord said to me, Go up against this land to destroy it, says Rahshakeh, 2 Kings xviii. 25.* (though he was mistaken in one point, imagining that *Hezekiah* had forsaken the Lord by taking away the altars and high places, and confining

all

on that account are frequently stiled *his servants* †.

Thus did this people by the various revolutions in their government, and frequent change of their condition, spread the knowledge of their history and religion far and wide; more especially, by the total dispersion of the ten tribes; and the great captivity of *Judah* under the *Affyrians* and *Babylonians*; when by their cleaving more stedfastly to their own God, and refusing to comply with the idolatrous worship of the Empire, they were distinguished by many extraordinary interpositions of divine Providence; and had several royal proclamations, and public decrees, made in their favour; which bore ample testimony to the power, wisdom, and justice of the supreme God; as in the successive reigns of *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Nabonadius* or *Belshazzar*, and *Darius the Mede*; as also of *Cyrus*, *Cambyses* or *Ahasuerus*, *Darius Hystaspis*, *Xerxes*, *Ahasuerus* the second, or *Artaxerxes**; many of which

princes
all religious worship to *Jerusalem*, ib. v. 22.) Comp. *If.* xxxvi. 10.—To the same purpose speaks *Pharaoh-Necho*, 2 *Chron.* xxxv. 21. whose words are said expressly to come from the mouth of God. ib. v. 22. This seems to be the most probable sense of both these places notwithstanding *Prideaux's* objections, Vol. I. p. 24. and 54. 8th Ed. See *Le Clerc* on 2 *Kings* xviii. 22. and 2 *Chron.* supra, and *Ezra* viii. 22. *Jer.* vi. 6. xl. 2. Comp. 1 *Esdras* i. 27, 28. 2 *Mac.* viii. 36. *Judith* v. 17, &c. and *Arnald* in loc. or *Patrick* on *Ester* vi. 13.

† *Jer.* xxv. 9. xxvii. 6. xlivi. 10.

* *Dan.* iii. 28. iv. 1, 2, &c. vi. 25, &c. 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 23. 1 *Esdr.* i. 27. ii. 3. viii. 8, &c. *Ezra* i. 3. vi. 6,—12. vii. 13. *Neh.* ii. 7, &c. *Ester* ix. 32. and x. *Conf.* *Joseph.* *Contr. Ap.* L. i. & *Ant.* L. xi. c. 1. et 5.

As to the effects which these might naturally produce, see *Le Clerc* on *If.* xli. 25. and *Taylor's* *Essay* on the Beauty of the Divine Economy, p. 38,—43.

princes found themselves described before in the Jewish prophecies; some of them very expressly; one by name. After these, *Alexander* comes to *Jerusalem*, consults the prophecies of *Daniel*, † and offers sacrifice to the most High ‡; and many of the Jews list in his troops §. After his death, *Ptolemy*, making himself master of *Judea*, carries above a hundred thousand Jews into *Egypt*; disperses them through every province there; employs the chief of them in his army and garrisons; plants great numbers in *Cyrene* and *Lybia* ||; and gives many more of them extraordinary privileges in *Alexandria* **, His son *Philadelphus* procured a translation of their law into *Greek*, the then most universal language; which was, as it were, a new publication of their religion ††; and for which, the *Alexandrian Jews* formerly kept a so-

solemn

† V. 9. c. viii. 21. xi. 3.

‡ *Josephus*, L. xi. c. 8. *Prideaux Part I. B. vii. p. 487. Univers. Hist. Vol. III. p. 345, &c. Jennings Lect. V. i. p. 71, &c.* though others question it. See *Moyle's Works*, Vol. II. Lect. 4, and 6.

§ *Josephus*, L. xi. c. ult.

|| *Prid. P. i. B. viii. p. 526. Joseph. Ant. L. xii. c. 1.*

** *Prid. ib. p. 541, 542. Joseph. 2. Contr. Ap. Philo.* computes the number of them settled in *Egypt*, at ten hundred thousand inhabitants.

†† A.C 277. V. *Usher Ann.* When the world, having been united under one great empire, was in the best manner prepared to receive it. *Allix's Kest. p. 11.* And when the use of the *Papyrus* for writing, just found out in that country, had contributed so much to the increase of books, and the advancement of learning. *Taylor, Sch. of Scr. Div. c. 37.* Concerning the end and uses which this translation served, see *Allix, Part ii. p. 161.* An accurate account of the compiling it, may be seen in *Prid. Vol. II. p. 34, &c. 8th Ed.* But comp. *Bochart. Hieroz. L. ii. c. 18. p. 216.* and *Prolegom. to Grabe's Sept. Tom. II. Prop. 12, &c.*

lemn day of rejoicing ||: (though afterwards it was turned into a fast; when they found what great use had been made of that version by the Christians §.) His successor *Euergetes* offered sacrifices, and gave thanks to the God of *Israel*, for all his victories; having seen the prophecies of *Daniel* concerning them; and been convinced that he owed them only to that God, whose prophet had so clearly predicted them*. *Ptolemy Philometor* had a comment on the five books of *Moses* dedicated to him, by *Aristobulus*, who had been his preceptor†; and permitted *Onias* the High Priest, to build a temple in his kingdom, after the model of that at *Jerusalem*; and to perform the same worship in it ‡; whereby the prophecy of *Iсаiah* was perhaps fulfilled ||, that there should be an altar unto the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt §: and by this means, his name became as well known there, as in *Judea* itself; that temple continuing for above three hundred

|| *Philo.* Vit. *Mof.* L. iii. Comp. *Basnage*, B. vi. c. 5. sect. 11. *Jenkin*, p. 93.

§ Vid. *Sepher Taanith* in *Mens. Teb.* and *Sealig.* Not. in *Chron. Euseb.* Ann. 133. et Prolegom. ad *Grabe*, Ed. Sept. Tom. II. Prop. 5. This fast is still kept by the *Jews*, on the fifth day of the 4th month *Tebeth*, which answers to our *December*.

* *Prid.* Part II. B. ii. p. 82. *Joseph*, Contr. App. L. ii.

† *Euseb.* Eccl. Hist. L. vii. c. ult. &c. *Prid.* Part ii. B. i. p. 29. *Euseb.* Præp. Evang. L. xiii. c. 12. *Clem. Alex.* Strom. L. i. & v.

‡ *Prid.* B. i. p. 264. || *Iсаiah* xix. 19, 20.

§ By this prophecy, thus understood of *Onias*, the *Jews* thought themselves authorized in building a temple in *Egypt*, though it was a thing otherwise forbidden by their law. *Allix's Reflec.* p. 163. Comp. *Glaff.* Præf. Rhet. Sac. p. 25. How they afterwards perverted some parts of it by corrupting the old version of the LXX, may be seen in *Owen's Enquiry* into the present state of that version, p. 49, &c.

dred and forty years]. Under the Seleucidæ they were in still higher favour, and enjoyed more extensive privileges, being admitted into all the cities of the lesser Asia, and allowed the same rights as any other citizens. When at length Judea was reduced to a Roman Province, this people, and their religion, became no less known all over that vast empire. That they were very remarkably preserved, and prospered under it for some time, is particularly noted in its history §. We find great privileges granted them by Julius Cæsar*; and Augustus†, Tiberius, and Vitellius,

¶ Jenkin, Vol. I. p. 92. Josephus says 333 years, B. J. L. vii. c. 30.

§ Dio Cassius says, Καὶ ἴστι καὶ πρᾶγμα τοῖς Ρωμαίοις τὸ γένος τύπος, καλύπτει μὲν πολλάκις, ἀνέγνθει δὲ ἐπὶ πλευτοῦ, ὅπερι καὶ ἐπαγγεῖλαι τοῖς νομίσμασι ἔχειν. Est id genus hominum (Judeorum) apud Romanos etiam: atque tametsi si per numero imminutum fuerit, ita tamen auctum est, ut legum quoque potestatem vicerit. L. xxxvii. p. 41. D. Ed. H. Steph. The historian probably means no more, than that they prevailed so far against the Romans, as to live by their own laws, or preserve the free exercise of their religion, notwithstanding those of the country that condemned it; which was an indulgence pretty extraordinary, considering their declared opposition to all other establishments; and the general odium which they incurred sometimes, by abusing the favour. Yet it is to be observed, that the Jews seldom opposed the Pagan religion uniformly, as the Christians did; but often pretended that Moses had forbidden them to speak against the gods of other nations, or to rob their temples. Josephus talks in this way (Contr. App. ii. 33.) to please and pacify the Gentiles. The historian Dio hated the Jews, and knew nothing of their religion, as appears in many places of his book.

* Joseph. Contr. App. ii. id. Ant. L. xvi c. 10, &c. ‘In the second Triumvirate, the Jews were particularly taken notice of and favoured. Antony introduced them to the senate, where every thing they desired was granted them; they were permitted to use their religious ceremonies, and the rites of their country, and to make

† Philo. Leg. ad Caium.

lius, each of which emperors sent victims to be offered at the temple of *Jerusalem*†.

And thus did the four great successive monarchies, severally contribute towards propagating the knowledge of the true God in the world; thus, as the last of his prophets had foretold ||, *from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, was his name great among the Gentiles* §. And though the *Jews* were never able at once to convert a whole nation ** to their church, and make it the established religion of the country; yet they gained every where very numerous *proselytes* (u) to their law; and many more to the belief of one supreme God, (which was perhaps

make sacrifices as their laws required. *Lentulus* also made a decree in their favour, that all such as used the *Jewish* ceremonies at *Ephesus*, should be exempted from warfare by reason of their religion. *Taylor*, ib. p. 48.

† *Tertull.* *Apol.* § 26. *Jenkin*, Vol. I. p. 86. *Allix*, B. ii. c. 25. The same thing had been often done before, particularly by *Antiochus* the Great, (*Joseph. Ant.* L. xii. c. 3.) and under *Seleucus*, when the *Jews* were in such high esteem, that sovereign princes courted their friendship, and made magnificent presents to the temple; and *Seleucus* furnished out of his own treasury, all the expences of it. 2 *Maccab.* iii. 3.—So far were they from being always that little inconsiderable nation, which some writers represent; particularly *Middleton* and *Bolingbroke*. Comp. *Witsi Egypt.* L. iii. c. 12. sect. 17. *Leland*, *Advantage*, &c. Vol. I. Part i. c. 19. *Macknight*, *Truth of the Gospel Hist.* B. 3. C. 2. § 5. * p. 476. *Young*. *Hist. of Idolatry*, Vol. I. p. 267. &c.

|| *Mal.* i. 11. § *Comp. Isaiah* xlv. 6. ** See *Jortin's Disc.* p. 89.

(u) Of this number, in all probability, were *Jethro* and his family, among the *Midianites*, (*Ex. xviii. 11.*) *Naaman* and his servants, among the *Syrians* (2 *Kings* v. 17.) *Araunah* the *Jebusite* (2 *Sam. xxiv. 23.*) *Hiram*, king of *Tyre*, (1 *Kings* v. 7. 2 *Chron.* ii. 12.) the queen of *Sheba*, *Egypt* and *Ethiopia*, (1 *Kings* x. *Joseph. Ant.* viii. 2.) In *Solomon's* time, there were found above

haps as much as was then required) and thereby prepared the minds of men for a more perfect dispensation*: and might have done this with still better success, had they acted more conformably to the genius of their own institution; and not treated all others with so much pride, perverseness and ill-nature, as often rendered themselves odious, and contemptible to

their

above an hundred and fifty three thousand strangers or proselytes in the land, (2 Chron. ii. 17.) without reckoning women and children; (ib. v. 18.) and in other lands, very probably, might there be as many, by the miraculous conversion of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. iii. 28, 29. iv. 34, &c.) and the other princes above mentioned, (Esther viii. 17.) to which we may add Josephus's remarkable account of the Adiabenian queen and her son. (Ant. xxvi. 2.) In our Saviour's time, we read of devout men, or proselytes, among the Jews, of every nation under heaven. (Acts ii. 5.) Besides the Eunuch of Ethiopia, there were Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites (or Persians of the province of Elymais, Dan. viii. 2.) and dwellers in Mesopotamia, Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and Lybia; Cretes and Arabians, and strangers of Rome. (Acts ii. 9, 10, 11.) See Jenkin, Vol. I. p. 93. or Lardner's Cred. of G. Hist. B. i. c. 3. sect. 5.

* It does not appear, that any of the most refined philosophers, those men of admired knowledge and genius, ever converted so much as a single person or village, from their idolatrous superstitions; on the contrary, they all meanly submitted and conformed to the idolatry established in their respective countries, and exhorted others to do so too. (See Doddridge on Rom. i. 21.) Whereas the Jews were instrumental to turn many from idolatry, and to spread the knowledge of the true God far and wide, in many parts of the Roman Empire, Babylonia, Persia, &c. Leland's answer to Moral. Philos. p. 57. Comp. id. Advant. of the Christ. Rel. Vol. I. Part i. c. 10.

This seems to be a proof from fact against the following assertion of Ld. Bolingbroke, ' Reason will pronounce, that no people was less fit than the Israelites, to be chosen for this great trust on every account. They broke the trust continually; and the miracles that were wrought to preserve it, notwithstanding their apostacies, would have preserved it, at least as well, all over the world.' Ess. iii. p. 242. What the influence of philosophy was upon the establishment of religion in Greece, &c. See Letters on Hume's Hist. B. vi. p. 162, &c.

their neighbours; especially in the latter ages of their government*. Though this was in some measure, a natural consequence of that seemingly *unsociable* spirit, so necessary in them to prevent any intimate connections, or (which would soon have been the consequence) an intercommunion with the idolatrous religions round them; and might be greatly aggravated by others, on their at length persisting in a settled aversion to those rites, by conforming to which they had suffered so much heretofore.

Besides, the Jewish prophets were often dispatched to foreign countries, to acquaint them with the counsels of the most High; and to make them *know the Lord*†. *Jeremiah* was ordained a prophet unto the nations‡; who, together with *Isaiah* and *Ezekiel*, prophesied to most of them. *Daniel* particularly describes the fate of the four monarchies; as was observed above. *Amos* proclaims the judgments of God on *Syria*, *Tyre*, *Edom*, *Moab* and *Ammon*. *Obadiah* is sent to the *Idumeans*; *Jonah* to the people of *Niniveh*, the metropolis of the *Affyrians*; who straightway believe, and repent at his preaching; which shews that God was kind to them, as well as to the *Jews*; and that they had his will in some measure discovered to them before; otherwise they would not have been so capable of understanding the divine message,

* Vid. *Jub.* Sat. xiv. ver. 100, 103, 104. *Tac.* Hist. v. 5. Comp. *Witſii* *Ægypt.* L. iii. c. 13. sect. 16. &c.

† *Ezek.* xxv. 7.—17. *passim.*

‡ *Jer.* i. 5. Comp. c. xxvii, and *Eſdras* i. 28. 47.

message, when it was deliver'd to them by that testify prophet, and of behaving themselves suitable to it*. In like manner, *Nabum* describes the final destruction of *Nineveh*; and *Zephaniah* proclaims the divine vengeance on the neighbouring countries of the *Philistines*, of *Moab* and *Ammon*; as well as *Ethiopia*, and *Affyria*†. And accordingly, their prophets are sought for, and honoured by the greatest princes; who were thereby induced to acknowledge, fear, and reverence the God of heaven; though they did not wholly conform to his will. Thus *Elissa* is applied to by the kings of *Syria*‡; *Jeremiah* protected by the king of *Babylon*||; *Daniel* honoured, and advanced by the successive rulers of the *Chaldeans*, *Medes* and *Persians*; as observed above.

Thus did this famous people serve every way to propagate the knowledge and fear of the one true God, either by their prosperity, or adversity; their conquests, or captivities §; their separation from the rest of the nations, or their dispersion among them:

by

* Vid. *Edwards's Survey*, &c. p. 296. *Buddei Parerg.* p. 426. and *Lowth on Jonah* iii. 5.

† 'One needs only read their books, to see that the prophets not only foretold obscure matters, or what particularly concerned their state; but also things of a more splendid nature; the overthrow of cities, of kingdoms; the destruction of whole nations, the destruction of their own city, with its re-establishment. Matters which would render their books very illustrious, and which would cause them to be read, not only by the *Jews*, but also by the neighbour nations, the *Ammonites*, *Moabites*, *Affyrians*, *Persians*, *Egyptians*, &c.' *Allix's Reflect.* B. ii. p. 41.

‡ *2 Kings* v. and viii. || *Jer.* xxxix. 11. xl. 1, &c.

§ *Victi victoribus leges dederunt*, says *Seneca* of his people. *Aug. De Civ. D. L. vi. c. 11.*

by the wise laws that were given them; and by the worthy teachers, which at various times were raised up in the midst of them; proclaiming the power and justice of the universal Governour of the world; and foretelling his disposal both of them, and the neighbouring states; together with the reason of these dispensations.*

From whence it appears, that mankind were far from being rejected by their Maker, during this state of their *nonage*; though he had his peculiar residence among the *Jews*, and was their more visible guardian, and director. The express terms of his covenant indeed belonged to them, which as it consisted in temporal things, he was often obliged to interpose, in order to make good the performance of it†; and which on that very account could not be a more perfect one (*w*): The real benefits thereof, the heavenly

* See the texts in p. 97. Note * † See Ep. *Sherl.* Disc. v. p. 150.

(*w*) Vid. *Crellii Orat. 2.* Perfectionem sanctitatis ideo Populo *Hebreo* præscribere, & ad illam sequendam eundem acrioribus stimulis incitare, *Moses* Dei nomine non potuit; quod felicitatem ac mercedem, ob quas pietas colenda esset, terrenæ Reipublicæ otio, & eorum tantum bonorum affluentia terminaret, quæ ad corporia pastum spectant, quorumque usus hujus vitæ circumscribitur cancellis; ita requirente istius populi infantia: quinetiam illam rempublicam, in qua pietatis suæ fructum Gens *Israelitica* debaret capere, armis & parare & tueri juberet. Unde si totam præceptorum *Mosaicorum* rationem ad ita tempora accommodatam consideres, animadvertes eam isti pietatis præmio apprime fuisse consentaneam, &c. *Crell. Eth. Christ.* p. 433, &c. Op. Tom. iv. ‘As they were to continue separate from others, for the preservation of the true religion, they stood in need of temporal promises, that they might have no temptation for temporal gain to fall away into the Gentile superstitions. For since the Heathen ascribed

ly Canaan, (of which the first may be conceived as only a type, or shadow *); extended to the people of every nation that feared God, and worked righteousness; and he might fix his residence in Jewry, as being in the midst of the nations†; in order to dispense the rays of heavenly light more equally, and advantageously among them; to whom his chosen people probably were designed to bear a due proportion; as some understand these words of Deut. xxxii. 8. *He*
anointed you in the day of your birth, to be a sign and a set

ascribed all their worldly successes to the worship of their idols and false gods, there was a necessity, in proportion, that the God of Israel should shew himself as gracious to his votaries, as the false gods were supposed to be to theirs; and therefore 'tis so far from being a derogation to this law that it abounds so much with the promises of temporal blessings, that it is a particular instance of the wisdom of it; such promises being not only most likely to work upon that stupid low-minded people, but suited also to their particular circumstances and occasions, as they were to be kept separate from other nations.' *Burnet Boyle's Lect.* p. 543. fol.

* In what sense it may be so conceiv'd, see Ld. Barrington's *Essay on the several dispensations of God to mankind*, p. 46, &c. Comp. *Pierce on Colos.* iii. 9, 17.

† *Ezek. v. 5.—xxxviii. 12.* Vid. *Reland. Palest. L. i. c. 10. Durell. Parallel. p. 160.* 'They were placed in the center of the then known world, between Egypt and Arabia on the one hand, and Syria, Chaldea, and Assyria on the other; among whom the first great kingdoms were erected, and from whence knowledge and learning seem to have been derived to the western nations. And they were also in the neighbourhood of Sydon and Tyre, the greatest Emporiums in the world; from whence ships went to all parts, and who planted colonies in the most distant countries.' *Le land, Advantage and Necessity, &c. Vol. I. Pt. i. c. 19.* How very capable of, and remarkably fitted this country was, for a more universal intercourse than any other, with all parts of the earth, the consequence resulting from thence, and for the communication of all the benefits of an universal benevolence is particularly explain'd in a note to p. 122, 123, of an obscure piece entitled, *Hymns to the Supreme Being.*

set the bounds of the people according to the number of the people of Israel. †.

We are apt to conceive that the Deity has been partial in his favours to this people ; and at the same time think that they deserved them the least of all people ; both which notions are entirely groundless. The favours shewn to them we have seen, were rather favours to the whole world § ; and they only made instruments in the hand of God, to hold forth this light to all around them ; whereof other nations were sure to reap the benefit, in due time ; whether they themselves stood faithful to their trust, or fell for violating it. ‘ Nay in truth their fall contributed rather to the speedier accomplishment of this design, than could have been expected even from their steadfastness. For, to what did their defections ultimately tend, but to supply the Deity with more frequent occasions to exert himself in the correction of their prevailing errors and their vices ? But their errors and vices were the errors and vices of *all* mankind. And therefore those wonderful exertions, which God employed for the reformation of the Jews, were equally adapted to the conversion of the Gentiles among whom they lived. Nor did they fail in their intended effect*.’

Nor

† See *Bryant*, above 88, 89, with *Jenkin*, Vol. I. p. 49. *Buxtorf*. *Diss. 2. de Ling. Heb. Confus.* § 43. That the Jews were spread over all the world about Christ’s time, as it is said, *Acts ii. 5.* Vid. *Joseph. B. i. c. 16.* *Philo*, *Leg. ad Caj. id. in Flacc.* *Lardner*, *Cred. B. i. c. 3.* or *Bagnay*, *Hist. B. vi.*

§ See *Taylor’s Key to the Apostolic Writings*. *Paraphr. on Rom. c. iv. p. 22.* * *Owen, B. L. f. 16.*

Nor was this nation worse than any other would probably have been, in the like circumstances. The *Canaanites*, we know, behaved worse under all their advantages, and repeated means of improvement; as observed above†; nor could their descendants, the *Carthagenians*, deserve any better character: nor did the more polite and learned nations, *Greek* and *Roman*, afterwards advance above the same gross errors in religious worship‡. Nay, whether the ancient *Hebrews* were not in some respects more particularly fit to have the *Oracles of God* committed to them, has been queried by such as observe their former diligence and exactness in settling their history, wherein all other nations were remarkably deficient:—Their carefulness in distinguishing their genealogies; and preserving their public records, which was so beneficial to the rest of the world||:—Their great tenaciousness of

all

† Pag. 92.

‡ See this observation explained in *Fleury's Manners of the Israelites*, c. xxi.

|| It may be observed, that the sacred history is distinct, methodical, and consistent throughout; the profane utterly deficient in the first ages, obscure and full of fictions in the succeeding ones: and that it is but just clear and precise in the principal facts about the time that the sacred history ends. [See this observation confirmed by *Patrick* on *Nehemiah* xii. 11.] So that this corrects and regulates that, and renders it intelligible in many instances, which must otherwise be given up as utterly inexplicable.—Yet this same nation, who may not have lost so much as one year from the creation of the world to the *Babylonish* captivity, as soon as they were deprived of the assistance of prophets, became most inaccurate in their methods of keeping time, there being nothing more erroneous than the accounts of *Josephus*, and the modern *Jews*, from the time of *Cyrus* to that of *Alexander the Great*;

all old rites and customs ; and their extraordinary zeal in making proselytes §. And though we may allow them to have been, in general, stupid and perverse ; yet if we look over their history with any tolerable degree of candour, we must be convinced that they were very different from the account given of them by some unfair modern writers*. And the more weak and sottish this people were of themselves, the better was God's great end answered, in distinguishing himself, and his revelations by them ; the less they did or could do in their own defence, the more illustrious was that very extraordinary providence, which protected them. The less capable they were of inventing the great things contained in their books, the more apparently did these point out another author ; and prove more uncontestedly, that they had such intelligence communicated to them from above. However, they were, in the hands of God, a certain means of bringing men by degrees to the knowledge of the truth. They were his *witnesses*, as He himself terms them §, *that he was God*. The first production, and original state of mankind, the history of the world and its government, manifested by frequent

Great ; notwithstanding that all the requisite assistances might easily have been borrowed from the neighbouring nations, who now kept regular annals.' *Hartley's Observ. on Man*, Vol. II. p. 116.

§ *Jenkin*, Vol. I. p. 91, 93. *I. A. Danzii Cura Hebr.* in conquirend. prosel.

* See the *Moral Philosopher*, Vol. I. p. 225, &c. [with *Leland's answer*, Vol. I. p. 207. *Worthington's Essay*, p. 105, 106.] and *Bolingbroke*, paſſim.

§ *Isaiah* xliii. 10, 12.

quent interpositions, and express predictions of the most remarkable events; was necessary to be known, and well remembered: Memoirs of this therefore were to be secured somewhere; and in such a manner as to be of use to every age. And this the *Jews* effected; being dispersed among all nations, and yet continuing a distinct people; by which means these great truths were both preserved pure, and propagated in most parts of the world. Their law was a *school-master**, to teach them the rudiments of religion, who were to instruct and improve others; restraining them from every kind of deviation into idolatry, by the sanction of immediate punishments, and encouraging them to persevere in the worship of their God, by present temporal rewards, with a prospect of future blessings of the same kind, till they, as well as the rest of the world, were got out of their *minority*; able to comprehend and walk by a more perfect rule; and fit to enter on, and make a proper use of their *inheritance*; —till the *fulness of the time was come*:—which is the next great Period we are to consider.

From the foregoing account it appears, that God made such ample provision for the instruction of mankind, by the various dispensations of his providence, and revelations of his will, *at sundry times and in divers manners*, that the mission of his Son was not so much wanted for some time; neither would his coming have been so seasonable, or so fitting, till after those

* *Gal. iii. 24.*

those other methods had been tried. It was proper that the *Houholder* should first send his several servants to see after the state of his *vineyard*, and reap the fruits of his early care and culture in their seasons[§]: That lower institutions should precede, and pave the way for this last, and highest of all.

The *patriarchs* had standing memorials of God's presence and protection, as well as frequent and familiar converse with him; thereby sufficiently assuring them of his favour, and inviting them to his service: The *law* was given to his peculiar people by *angels* (*b*), in all the appearances of pomp and terror, to astonish and awe them into obedience; the *prophets* were sent to denounce variety of judgments against their disobedience;—to threaten them with the severest plagues on their apostasy;—to promise them proportionable blessings upon a return to their duty; and by both means prepare them for, and gradually open to them, the prospect of that universal Blessing, the true end and great completion of all his promises,—MESSIAH; in whom were laid up the *sure mercies of David*; mercies of an higher nature than any of those which they were then expecting; who should procure for them a more noble and extensive kingdom, than they had ever dreamt of; should make them brethren and fellow-citizens with all the world here, and fellow-heirs to a more valuable inheritance

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[§] *Matth.* xxi. 33. *Jer.* vii. 25.

(*b*) *Act.* vii. 53. *Gal.* iii. 19. *Heb.* iii. 2.

in the world to come*: Who, notwithstanding their great blindness, and perverseness, and numberless transgressions, should at length deliver them from all their adversities ; and finally restore them, and *all mankind*, to the favour and full enjoyment of their God.

The doctrines he taught, contain a summary of the most agreeable and important truths, (though not delivered in any systematic †, artful method, nor adapted in any respect to vicious palates) giving us the most worthy, notions of the Deity, and affording the strongest motives to love and obey him ;—the greatest incitement to resemble our blessed Saviour himself in holiness, and every virtue of the heavenly life.

The benefits he conferred, were the rescuing us from the power, and redeeming us from the penalty
of

* * During these circumstances—God was pleased that a law-giver should be born among the *Jews*, of another nature than he whom they expected, and infinitely more useful to them. Instead of a temporal king, who might have increased their power and renown, but would not have lessened their ignorance, nor their vices ; God sent them a king worthy of him, who taught them how they ought to live here, to be eternally happy after this life : and shewed them, that, instead of being members of a little commonwealth, and enemies to the rest of mankind, they ought to look upon the whole world as their native country, and all men as their fellow-citizens : A thought worthy of those, who already professed to believe, that all men are equally the work of God.' *Le Clerc, Causes of Incred.* p. 267.

† That there is less ground to suspect them of imposture on this account, and that they are thereby of much greater use, see *Leland's answe. to Christ. as old, &c.* Vol. II. p. 166, &c. and p. 245, 246. Add *Crell, Resp. ad Q.* Tom. II. p. 322, &c. and *Jeffrey's Commencement Serm. on Heb. i. 1.* in which he has considered the subject more at large, and shewn particularly, ' Why God thought fit to deliver the doctrine of our religion and happiness in the form of a history, rather than in any other method.'

of sin ; repairing the breach made in our nature by the first *Adam*, and restoring to us the lost communion with our Maker ; not indeed in the same open, visible manner as at first ; which is neither necessary for, nor suitable to these ages of the world ; but by the more secret, silent influences of his holy *Spirit* ; which are equally efficacious (*e*) if duly attended to, and improved ; enabling us to attain unto all that perfection which he requires, or we, in the present state, are capable of ; and thereby entitling us to some higher degree of happiness, and glory in another. He cancels the original *Covenant** of works ; and purchases a new one full of grace and mercy ; freeing us from the whole of *Adam's curse*, *viz.* *death*, or utter *extinction†* ; and finally assuring us of a complete victory over both that, and *hell‡*, by the gift of *eternal life*, and happiness. This is the true import of the Christian institution ; and in this sense it must appear to be indeed a *gospel, or good tidings of great joy to ALL people||*: Which therefore ought to be reserved till mankind were able to comprehend and ready to receive so great a blessing ; till they were fit to make

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(*c*) See *Wollaston*, p. 106. or *King*, p. 376. 4th Ed.

* In what sense covenants are understood, was hinted above, p. 51. note i.

† See p. 51. note *.

‡ *Rev. xx. 14.*

|| In what respects Christianity exceeded all former institutions, may be seen at large in *Edwards's Survey*, p. 313, 323. The effects, which it will some time certainly produce, are well described by *Worthington*, *Essay on Man's Redemption*, c. II, &c. who supposes, perhaps not on so good grounds, that these will be attainable even *in this life*.

the proper use of such a scheme of infinite goodness, and philanthropy. As nothing greater could come after this, and this was to be offered but once for all; (otherwise, as the apostle says §, *Christ must often have suffered since the foundation of the world*; often in every country, and as often in vain; his offers of salvation by their cheapness slighted, his sufferings disregarded;) as no farther manifestation of God's will could be made to man either in terms more full and express, or in a way more kind, and condescending; it was fit that all suitable provisions should be made for the reception, and continuance of it in the world; all proper preparations used to fix, and ascertain its evidence; as well as to explain its worth, and make men sensible of its necessity. To this purpose the *Jews* were to be trained up to the expectation of it by a series of prophecies, foretelling the time, place, and every circumstance of the *Messiah's* advent; and describing the nature of his kingdom: Their law was to continue till it had effectually guarded them from all kinds of idolatry, and secured their dependence on the one supreme God; till they had attained to such rational notions of his nature and providence, as qualified them for a more pure and perfect way of worshipping him; and enabled them to communicate it to the rest of the world. The *Gentiles* were to have sufficient experience both of the weakness of their understanding in searching after God, and the in-

§ *Heb.* ix. 26.

infirmity of their corrupted nature, in not acting up to what they might, and did discover; sufficient to make them wish and hope for some heavenly guide, which in fact the wisest of them did; as particularly appears from two remarkable instances, in *Socrates's* discourse upon *prayer*, and *sacrifice**; and in *Aristotle's* declaration just before his death, [if the account of it be genuine] concerning the reasonableness of believing that the gods should at length come down from Heaven, to instruct and relieve mankind†. Thus was the consciousness of their defects requisite in the heathens, to prepare them for, and dispose them to embrace a remedy, when it should be offered; and the *Jewish* economy was equally requisite, to fit them for administering this remedy; the one made its value then better understood, the other rendered its evidence more uncontested throughout all ages. No stronger testimony, than that of prophecy, could be given,

* See *Plato's* second *Alcibiades* near the end. More passages to the same purpose are collected by Dr. S. Clarke, *Evidences*, prop. 7. and Young, *Dissert.* Vol. I.

† *Auctor de Pomo* [de quo vid. *Fabrie. Bibl. Gr.* Tom. II. L. iii. p. 166.] *Cael. Rhod. Ant.* L. xvii. 36. [See Bayle's *Dift. Art. Aristotle*, note Q.] *Stanley Vit. Phil.* Concerning the tradition of his having conversed with a *Jew*, see *Gen. Dift.* Vol. II. p. 267. and *Prid. Conn. Part i.* B. vii. p. 475 and 480. 8th Ed. See also a remarkable passage in *Jamblichus Vit. Pythag.* c 28. To the foregoing observation *Bolingbroke* replies, that 'the complaints and expectations of these men were founded in proud curiosity and vain presumption. B's Works, Vol. V. p. 220. as if it were a piece of vanity and presumption in any reasonable creature to be desirous of learning, what would here most effectually recommend it to the favour of its creator; and merely pride and ill-e curiosity, to know what would become of it for ever hereafter!'

given, to confirm its truth ; nor any greater token of its usefulness, than that which appeared in the miserable state of the heathen world without it ; both highly contributed to procure *Christianity* its due regard, and esteem in the world ; but neither of them could have taken place, had it been from the beginning ; as the abovementioned objection* supposes.

We see then in general, that some time must have preceded the publication of the gospel ; and we ought to consider, that if it were delayed a while longer than we can particularly account for, yet as much as that period may seem to have lost, so much we of these latter ages manifestly get by the delay ; 'tis so much nearer to us ; and thereby its light and evidence more clear at present ; its heat and influence proportionably stronger ; for all which we have occasion enough already : and well must it have been for us that it came so late, if its evidence decrease so fast by length of time, as these very same objectors would insinuate†. How do we know but that it might be delivered about the middle age of the world ; and by that means be upon the whole nearest to the several generations ; and the most just proportion kept between the length of time, during which *Christ's* future advent was to be foretold and expected ; and that in which his past appearance is to be acknowledged,

* Pag. 43.

† *Christ. as old*, c. 12. p. 163. 8vo. from *Craig.* : of which see *Rotheram's Dissertation*, *Edinb.* 1743. *Phil. Transl.* No. 257. *Broughton against Tindal*, Part iii. p. 5, &c. *Randolph*, Part ii. p. 34, &c.

ledged, and commemorated? We are hasty, and short-sighted: Our views limited to a few years; and we become impatient at finding any of them pass over, before the whole plot is unravel'd; and would have all brought on the stage at once: but it is far otherwise with the great God, to whom a thousand years are as one day; who has an immensely large progressive scheme, consisting of many underparts, and intermediate steps; all placed in their proper periods, and each rising upon the past; and the whole conducted in that gentle, regular manner, which is best suited to the moral government of a world of intelligent, free agents, and most becoming a Governor of infinite wisdom and goodness.

But to be more particular. The period in which our Saviour came into the world may be conceived to be the *fulness of time*, and fittest for such a dispensation, on the following accounts.

First, as that age appeared to want it most:

Secondly, as it was the most able to receive and propagate it: and,

Thirdly, as it was the best qualified to examine its evidence, confirm its truth, and convey it down to future ages.

First, that age wanted it most; in regard both to *morals* and *religion*.

1. It stood in the greatest need of a reformation in *morals*; as it appears to have been the most profligate of any upon record.

As

As to the *Jews*, we are told, that both their magistracy, and ministry were then corrupted to the last degree ;—their laws against the worst of villains rarely executed (*p*) ;—their most sacred offices, not excepting that of the high priesthood, set to sale ;—the temple turned into a place of merchandise ;—their priests made of the lowest of the people, and devoted wholly to self interest, and the lowest kinds of traffick ;—the whole nation split into factions ; hating, and persecuting, and devouring one another*.

In short, the account which their own historian gives of them, not long after this time, will be sufficient to decide the point, who concludes it with this declaration ; that if the *Romans* had delayed taking vengeance on them, he believes their city must either have been swallowed by an earthquake, or a deluge, or destroyed by fire from heaven, as *Sodom* was ; since it produced a much more impious generation (*r*).—

But

(*p*) The low state of their *Sanhedrim* about that time, may be seen at large in *Lightfoot*, Op. Lat. Vol. II. p. 370, 671, &c. Their gradual corruption and degeneracy is observed by *Strabo*, L. xvi. p. 761, 762. Ed. *Lut. Par.* 1620.

* See *Lightfoot*, Op. Lat. Vol. II. p. 148, 272, &c. *Edwards's Survey*, Vol. I. p. 389, &c. *Lardner*, Cred. of the G. Hist. B. i. c. 5. *Benson*, Hist. of planting the *Chr. Rel.* Vol. II. p. 234, &c. *Le Clerc*, Proleg. ad Hist. Eccl. sect. 1, 2. *Bagnay*, B. i. c. 5, &c. *Whitby*, Necessity, &c. of *Chr. Rev.* c. 2.

Nor is this at all surprising, since the reigning party among them were at that time *Sadduces*. *Joseph. Ant.* xviii. 2. Add *Wall's note* on *Acts* v. 17.

(*r*) *Josephus*, B. J. L. xvi. c. 16. Remarkable is the description which the *Talmudists* give of that generation in which *Messiah* should come. *Talm. Bab.* in *Sanhedr.* fol. 97. *When the son of David cometh, the synagogue shall become stews ; Galilee shall*

But this remarkable wickedness of the Jews will be considered, in another respect, hereafter.

Nor were the Gentiles less corrupt, nor does it seem possible to conceive the generality of them to be sunk lower in all kinds of vice and sensuality, than they were at that time, (notwithstanding all their improvements in other respects;) as may sufficiently appear from the description given of them by St. Paul*, the truth of whose witness is most abundantly confirmed by their own writers (y).

2. But

shall be destroyed, Gablab shall be desolate, and the men of the borders of Israel shall go from city to city, and the wisdom of the scribes shall be abominated, and religious persons shall be scorned, and the faces of that generation shall be as dogs. Vid. Lightf. Harm. N. T. p. 326.

* Rom. i. 21, &c. As to the great and general corruption of the world at this time, more particularly in regard to its private and domestic situation in the two important articles of marriage, and of servitude; and the very seasonable reformation of each by the christian institution, see Robertson's Serm. before the Soc. in Scotland, 1755.

(y) Seneca de Clem. i. 23. says, that in the reign of *Claudius*, in five years, more parricides were condemned and punished, than had been known in all the past ages: A proof of the extreme degeneracy of those times. ‘Ecce Romana respublica, quod non ego primus dico, sed auctores eorum vnde haec merecede didicimus tanto ante dixerunt, ante Christi adventum, paulatim mutata, et ex pulcherrima atque optima, pessima atque flagitiosissima facta est. Ecce ante Christi adventum post deletam Carthaginem, majorum mores non paulatim ut antea, sed torrentis modo precipitati: adeo juventus luxu atque avaritia corrupta est.’ Augustin. de Civ. D. L ii. c. 19. & id. ib. c. 21. Conf. Sallust. B. C. Paterc. L. ii. c. 1. Senec. Ep. 7. et De ira, L ii. c. 8, &c. cum Sueton. Tacit. Petr. Arb. passim. ‘Si Ethnicorum mores paulo ante Christum et paulo post intueamur, que fuit doctissima etas, pessimos et sceleratissimos fuisse compcriemus, ut docent qui eorum temporum historiam conscriperunt. Bella civilia temporibus Matrii, et Sulla; status reipub. Rom. perturbatissimus, qui proxime sequutus est: bella iterum civilia Caf. et Pomp. tum etiam triumvir.

2. But Secondly, The world at that time more especially wanted a reformation in *religion*; and was grown weary of all former institutions. The *Jewish* law had fully answered its end, and in a manner ceased of itself; the ceremonial part of their economy began rather to be a yoke of servitude, and an unnecessary burden to them; the moral was in a great measure lost in their loose casuistry, and vacated by their traditions (z). The sense of the prophetic writings

vir. Principatus ipse Aug. et multo magis Tib. Calig. Ner. et Dom. ne ulterius pergam, cloacæ fuerunt flagitiorum et scelerum apud Romanos; qui tamen Græcos passim quasi se deteriores describunt. Sall. Cic. Sen. Tacit. Surt. aliquæ, cum a nobis hodie leguntur, etiamnum indignationem in improbos illius ævi homines nobis movent: ne proferam Pers. et Juven. Poetas satiricos, qui forte modum excessisse, in castigandis moribus sui ævi, possent. Itaque pravae religionis effectus sistere non potuit philosophia, et paucorum contra torrentem nitentium conatus irrisi fuere? Cler. Prol. Eccl. Hist. sect. 2. c. 1. 20. add Whitty, Necessity of Christ. Rev. c. 8. Mosheim. de Rebus Christ. ante Constantinum, c. 1. sect. 21. Harnwood, Introd. to the N. T. c. 2.

(z) Quare vastatum est forum Bethone tribus ante Jerusalem annis? Quia verba sua verbis Legis præponebant. Gem. Bab. Metz. c. 7. Ex quo multiplicati sunt discipuli Schanmai et Hillelis,—multiplicata sunt schismata in Israele, et facta est Lex, quasi Lex duplex. Gemara Sanhedrim, c. 10. Eorum tum religio, quantumvis scripturas regulam suam pronunciarent, traditionibus omnis generis præcipue nitebatur; quas non tantum scripturis præferabant, sed iidem omnem scripturis autoritatem derrogabant. Marc. vii. 7.—9. Tenuerunt Dominum cum illis contraxisse sedis juxta legem Traditionis. Baal Turim in Gen. i. 3. Tenebant scriptam legem deficere comparantam legi non scriptam. Tanch. fol. 4. Legemque scriptam ob mercadum doceri posse, non item non scriptam. Maimon. in Thalm. Torah. Perck. 1. Lightfoot, Op. Lat. Vol. I. p. 517. Vide plura testimonia, ibid. Vol. II. p. 31. or Eng. Harm. 236, 237. Comp. Buxtorf De abbrev. Heb. p. 226, &c. and Mod. Univ. Hist. B. xx. c. 1. note D. ‘At these times their school-learning was come to the very height;—so that now in a double seasonableness doth Christ the divine wisdom appear, and set in amongst them, at twelve years old beginning, and all the

writings had been darkened, and debased by their corrupt glosses; and the key of true knowledge taken away, by those very persons that should have opened the scriptures, and imparted that knowledge to them.

Philosophy had shewn its utmost force in the great masters of *Athens*, and *Rome*; and was able to afford just light enough to discover its own errors and defects, and to refer them to a better guide; as we have seen above. Its votaries having been long tossed to and fro, among the variety of systems which human wit had invented, were at last left in absolute uncertainty; unable to decide amongst them, and influenced by nothing more than some dark hints of tradition (A); and that became one of its most

flourish-

the time of his ministry after, going on to shew them their wisdom, folly; and his own word and doctrine, the divine oracles of wisdom. In a double seasonableness, I say, when their learning was now come to the height, and when their traditions had to the utmost made the word of God of no effect.' *Lights.* Harm. N. T. Vol. p. 206. id. p. 652.

(A) This appears to have always been the case in most of the best things which they deliver on the most important subjects, as may be easily discerned by the abrupt manner in which they commonly retail such sentiments; by their seldom reasoning on them long consistently; or being able to pursue their natural consequences: from whence methinks any indifferent person would conclude, that they had never traced such out by their own reason, nor were the original discoverers of them; at least, I could not help concluding so from hence; as well as from their frequent citing of *tradition*, and some *sacred records*; and appealing to what they have heard upon such subjects. I might have set down numberless expressions, that confirm this observation, though I do not doubt but the same thing has been observed by many others: However, I shall point out some remarkable passages from *Plato* to this purpose. *Philebus:* Οι μεν διδασκούσιν οὐτε τὰς ιστορίας θεων αἰτήσεις ταῦτα φάμενοι. Id. Epist. vii. Πατέρων δὲ οὐτε ἀνθρώπων τικαὶ

flourishing sects which professed to doubt of every thing: and accordingly, we find the great advocate and ornament of this sect, *Cicero*, declaring on some of the most important points, that it was impossible to determine on which side lay (not the certainty, for that they did not pretend to discover; but) even the greatest

ισροὺς λογοὺς, οἱ δὲ μηνυμένοι ἡπειρὸν ἀβαίνοτος ψυχὴ τίναι, δικαστικός τε ἰσχὺς, καὶ τινὶ ταῖς μηγίτας τιμωρίαις, ὅταν τις ἀπάλλαχθε τὸ σύμφατος. *Gorgias*: Ταῦτ' ἔστι, ὁ Καλλικλεὺς, ἢ ἕντος ἀποκαλεῖ πειστῶν ἀλεθὴ τίναι, καὶ ἐν τιτανὶ τῶν λογών τοιοῦτος λογιζόμενοι συμβαίνεται. Οἱ Θανάτοις κ. τ. λ. *Phædo*: Παλαιός μην ἐντὸς τις ὁ λογος ὃς τοῖς μηνιαῖς, ὃς τοῖς ἵβεται ἀφίκομεναι [άι Ψυχαι] καὶ παλιν γε δευτέρῳ ἀφίκονται, καὶ γείροται ἐκ τῶν τεθνῶν. *Id.* *Ibid.* Ἡ δὲ καὶ λεγοταῖς μηνιγιτισθεῖσαί φέρεται ἡ βλαστήσι του τελευτησαί τινός ἐν ἀρχῇ τῆς ἔνετος περιουσίας. Λεγοταῖ διὰ τοῦτο, ὃς ἀρτα τελευτησαί τινας ὁ ἄκατος δαίμονος ὅποις ζωτικὸς εἴληχτος ἔγειρις ἦγει τοῖς τοποῖς, οἱ δὲ τις συλλογούντας διδοκούσιντος ἡδὺ προσεισθαί κ. τ. λ. *Ibid.* Πολλοὶ δὲ ἔστι καὶ Στοιχεῖα της γης τοποί, καὶ ἀντη μὲν αἷς, ἔτι δὲν ὑπὸ των περὶ γης μεθόποι τελεγεῖται, ὃς ἴδιος ὑπὸ τίνος πεπειρασθεί. Καὶ ὁ Σιρενεὺς, τις ταῦτα, ἐψ., λεγεῖς, ὁ Σιρενεὺς; περὶ γηρὸς τοι της γης καὶ αἵτες πολλα δὲ ἀντη κ. τ. λ. *Apol.* *Socr.* Εἰ δι αὐτοῖς ἀποδημητοῖς ἔστι ὁ Θανάτος ἵβεται ἐκ ἀλλοῖς τοποῖς, καὶ ἀληθὴ ἔστι τα λεγομένα κ. τ. λ. *Ibid.* Ταῦτα γαρ ἀλλα ἴνδιαιμονεστέρας ποιον οἱ ἕποι τῶν ἴδιων δὲ καὶ ἥδη τοι λεπτοῖς χρονοῖς εἰσι, εἰπεῖρ γε τα λεγομένα ἀληθῆ ἔστι. *Phædrus*: Ταῦτα τη ἔνετα χρεῖα, παρτεῖς της λογοὺς ἀντα καὶ κατη μετατρέφονται, ἐπισκοπεῖν εἰ τις πῃ φωνητα καὶ βροχυτεῖσα φωνῆται εἰπεῖσται ἀπό της ὁδοῦ. Ιδια μη μετατρέπονται ἀπό της παραχωρεῖ, οὗτος ἀληγον τα καὶ λειπεῖ. Άλλα εἰ τινα πῃ βούθησαι ἔχει, επεκκωντας λογοῖς ἐπί τοις ἀλλα πιρηνοῖς λεγοντα ἀπαριμητοσχέτεταις. *Ibid.* Αξονεγγύ' ἔχει λεγεῖται τοι τραπεζίτου. Τοδὲ ἀληθὲς αὕτοι ἴστοι. *Id. in Timaeo*: Εγν Φρεστο, παλαιοῖς ἀποκαλεῖσθαι λογοτ., ἡ περὶ ἀνδρος. *Id. de Rep.* 10. fin. Καὶ ετοῦ, ὁ Γλαυκός, μιθος ἴστοι καὶ ἐκ ἀπολίτα. Καὶ ἄρας ἀσοστον, ἀτ πιθαρια κατοῦ. From these few extracts any one that can read *Plato* may judge, whether by his own confession both he and his master *Socrates* did not borrow their notions concerning a future state of rewards and punishments somewhere; whether it be such a gross piece of monk-like superstition and nonsense in old *Suidas* to derive them immediately from the *Egyptians*, as Mr. Cooper, author of the life of *Socrates*, supposes, p. 61. [though he seems to be of the same mind with *Suidas* himself afterwards, when he says, this very thing is observed of all the Grecian Theology, by all ancient authors in general, and agreed to by all moderns, except one, p. 120.] and whether even that other priestly conclu-

greatest probability (†); concluding that in all such cases, 'tis much easier for him to say what is not his opinion, than what is (a). Nay, professing that in

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fion, that these two philosophers might be originally beholden to some revelation for the best conceptions they had on this most important point, be blasphemy, and merit all the curious epithets with which this extraordinary writer has adorned it.

What reason there is for supposing *Plato* to have borrowed much from the *Hebrews*, may be seen in *Menag. Obs. ad D. Laert.* Vol. II. L. iii. sect. 6. p. 139, &c. Ed. *Meibom.* or *Witfi. Egypti.* L. iii. c. 13. sect. 4, 5, 8.

That the *Indians* took the same way of philosophizing with him upon these subjects is observed by *Strabo.* L. xv. p. 713. Ed. *Par.* 1620. παραλαμβάνεις δέ μαι μύθος, οντος καὶ Πλάτωνος, περὶ τῆς αἰθληγορίας θύγατος, καὶ τοῦ εἰδότος αὐτὸν μύθον, καὶ τοῦτον τοντούτον.

(†) *Harum sententiarum qua vera sit, Deus aliquis viderit; que verissimilla magna questio est.* *Tusc. Q.* L. i. sect. xi. vid. *Cleric. Prol. ad Hist. Eccl.* sect. ii. c. 6. *de Academicis.*

(a) *De Nat. Deor.* L. i. c. 32. Utinam tam facile vera inventare possem, quam falsa convincere. Id. apud *Lett.* L. ii. c. 3. Notwithstanding all the fine things which he had said about the *immortality of the soul*, or, what with him amounted to the same, a future state; in which point he seems to be the most sanguine and positive; yet in his *epistles* (where he speaks his real thoughts) we find him giving it all up, and having recourse only to the miserable comfort of a final *insensibility*. L. v. Ep. ult. Ut hoc saltet in maximis malis boni consequamur, ut mortem, quam etiam beati contemnere debeamus, propterea quod nullum sensum esset habitura, nunc sic affecti, non modo contemnere debeamus, sed etiam optare. L. vi. Ep. iii. Deinde quod mihi ad consolationem cotimine tecum est, si jam vocer ad exitum vitae, non ab ea Repul. avellar, qua eartendum esse doleam, præsertim cum id sine ullo sensu futurum sit. Ib. Ep. iv. Sed cum plus in metuendo mali sit, quam in ipso illo quod timeatur, defino; præsertim cum impendeat, in quo non modo dolor nullus, verum finis etiam doloris futurus sit. Id. Ep. 21.—Una ratio videtur, quicquid evenit ferre moderate; præsertim cum omnium rerum mox sit extremum. More passages to the same purpose are collected in, *Div. Leg.* p. 387, &c. 2d Edit: And among the several apologies which the author of *Cicero's life* has offered for them, this probably will be esteemed the most natural; that in a melancholy hour, *doubts and difficulties* may be supposed to have got the ascendant over him. Vol. II. p. 565. 4to. In truth, *Cicero* seems to have been

grand article of a first cause, if he had discovered the truth, he durst not have divulged it*: and putting the supposition as a matter of probability, that the Philosophers were Atheists†. Men began then to be sensible, that human reason was of itself a very insufficient director in this point; and grew weary‡ of

been often in the state of mind which he so well describes, *Tusq.* Q. L. i. sect. 11. M.—*Evolve diligenter ejus [Platonis] eum librum, qui est de animo: amplius quod desideres nihil erit.* A. *Feci mehercule, et quidem sæpius; sed nescio quomodo, dum lego, assentior: eum posui librum, et tecum ipse de immortalitate animorum cœpi cogitare, assensio omnis illa elabitur.* That he had great doubts of a *providence*, is fully shewa by the author of *Ep. ad C. Middleton*, p. 74. note (b). That he both recommended *suicide* as the best refuge in affliction, and had frequent thoughts of putting it in practice, is no less clearly proved by the same writer, p. 76, 77, 78. And though *Cicero* himself declares, upon occasion, that he was with difficulty withheld from it, by the advice of *Atticus*, and the intreaty of his friends: *ibid.* yet it appears too plainly, that this was not owing at last, either to the strength of his judgment or his resolution; to any prudential considerations respecting the state, himself or his relations: so much as to the same notorious want of courage, which disabled him from bearing his misfortunes decently, and which must equally deter him from attempting to end them together with his life.

* *Nihil autem gigni posse sine causis. Atque illum quidem quasi parentem hujus Universitatis invenire difficile: et cum jam inveneris, indicare in vulgus nefas.* *De Univers. sect. 2.*

† *In eo autem quod in opinione positum est, hujusmodi sunt probabilia.—Eos qui Philosophia dent operam non arbitrari Deos esse.* *De Inventione, L. i. c. 29.*

‡ *Omnis cognitio multis est obstructa difficultatibus, eaque est et in ipsis rebus obscuritas, et in judiciis nostris infirmitas, ut non sine causa et doctissimi et antiquissimi invenire se posse quod cuperent diffisi sint.* *Cic. Acad. ii. 3.* *Mihi autem non modo ad sapientiam cœci videmur, sed ad ea ipsa quæ aliqua ex parte cerni videantur, hebetes et obtusi.* *Id. ap. Lact. L. iii. c. 14,* *Nescio quis nos teneat error, et miserabilis ignoratio veri.* *Id. ib.* More testimonies to the same purpose may be seen in *Leng. B. Lect.* sect.

of the common delusions from pretended revelation. Oracles, omens, portents, were generally exploded ||; the old fables of *Elysian* fields, and *Pluto's* kingdom, were grown ridiculous; and given over to poets and painters, as the same author informs us §. Another learned writer of the same time tells us, that they had near three hundred opinions about the *chief good*, and ultimate *end of action**; that the objects of their devotion amounted to thirty thousand †; that there were no less than three hundred *Jupiters* or chief gods among them ‡; in short, that they had multiplied their scandalous deities to such a degree, and modelled their superstitious worship in such a manner, that he, and others of the wiser, and more sober sort, were ashamed of them **: not to mention that the prevalence of the *Epicurean* philosophy had rendered both,

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sect. 12. p. 109, 110. fol. *Campbell's Necessity of Rev. Leland's Advantage, &c.* Vol. II.

|| *Cic. de Div. passim. Weston's Inquiry into the Rejection of the Christian Miracles*, p. 456.

§ *Tusc. Quæst L. i. c. 10, 11. Quid negotii est hæc Poetarum et Pictorum portenta convincere? Quis est enim tam excors, quem ista moveant?* Comp. *Id. ib. c. 16. et Or. pro A. Cluent. 61. Nisi forte ineptiis ac Fabulis ducimus, ut existimemus ullum apud inferos impiorum supplicia perferre.* — *Quæ si falsa sint, id quod omnes intelligunt.* — *Comp. id. de Nat. D. L. ii. pr. Nemo tam puer est ut Cerberum timeat et tenebras, et larvarum habitum nudis ossibus cohærentium. Mors nos aut consumit, aut emittit.*

Sen. Ep. 24.

* *Varro ap. Aug. de Civ. D. L. xix. c. 1.*

† *Aug. de Cecil. Deif. 4, 5, 6. Jurieu, Crit. Hist. Vol. 2. p. 13. Prudentius says, Ter centum millia divum. Apoth. V. 455.*

‡ *Tertull. Apol. c. 14.*

** See *Jenkin*, Vol. I. p. 338. and *Sartorius de Hypocrisi Gentilium circa cultum deorum.* Add *Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical Hist.* p. 5.

in a great measure, insignificant §.—So great want had they of a thorough reformation in matters of religion.

Secondly, That age was also the fittest to receive such a benefit, as well as to propagate it in the world. At the same time that the *Jewish* œconomy waxed old, and was ready to vanish away, it had served to build up a better house ; and fitted them for a more perfect institution ; and when the eye of reason in the Gentile world, had most of all discovered its own dimness, and could do little more than shew the darkness that surrounded them ; it then, in the best manner, prepared them to receive, and rejoice in a greater light. The many fine lectures which had been at several times delivered to the *Jews*, by those able *tutors* and *governors* under whom God had placed them ; by *Moses*, *Joshua*, *Samuel*, *David*, *Solomon*, and the subsequent *prophets* ; though all these were in fact found insufficient to direct their conduct ; and most of them then, had been to a great degree, defeated as is observed above ; yet we must allow, that, towards the end of this dispensation, they began in general to be better understood than formerly ; upon the erecting of many synagogues, after the *Babylonish* captivity*, they were more frequently read and

§ See *Le Clerc*, Causes of Incred. p. 266. *Moshem*. De rebus Christ. ante Constantin. L. i. c. 1. sect. 25.

* Vid. *Buddei Hist. Eccl. V. T. Vol. II.* pag. 976. *Vitrina*, de Synag. L. i. Part ii. c. 12. p. 413. or *Patrick on 2 Chron.*

and inculcated ; and under their persecutions, in the time of the *Maccabees*, more thoroughly studied and regarded ; and lastly, by their numerous schools, and academies, which flourished in the most corrupt parts of their government†, learning of all kinds had spred itself among them, and got so good footing, as to render them the most capable of discerning these corruptions ; and recovering themselves from the errors and abuses abovementioned ; when these were once freely pointed out ; so that notwithstanding the prevailing iniquity, which made those, in that respect the worst of times, this people had yet been so far cultivated, as to be able to receive the promised seed ; at least much more so, than they had been at any time assignable before*.

The same thing had been done to the heathen, in a good measure, by their celebrated legislators and philosophers ; who got most of their best notions from travel-

xxxvi. 15. who assigns this as one chief cause of their keeping so clear of idolatry in after times, when they had neither prophets nor miracles among them. Add *Prid.* Vol. I. p. 389. 8th Ed. That they had synagogues before the captivity, see *Lightfoot*, Harm. p. 609, &c. *Le Clerc* on Ps. lxxiv. 8. and *Jenning's Lect.* B. 2. C. 2.

† See *Vitrina*, Obs. Sacr. L. vi. c. 14. sect. 8, 9. Some of their own authors say, there were near four hundred synagogues in *Jerusalem* itself ; as many academies ; and the same number of schools : some reckon four hundred and eighty. [Buddei Eccl. Hist. Vol. II. Part ii. sect. 7. ** p. 966, &c. Light. Op. Vol. II. p. 140. and 197.] That they assembled in these *synagogues* three times a week, vid. id. ib. p. 280. et *Schoetgen*. Hor. Heb. in Act. Apost. xiii. 42. Comp. Univers. Hist. B. ii. c. 1. p. 26. Note [q].

* ‘Whilst the Prophets were in being, to defend the law, the people were negligent ; but since there have been no Prophets, zeal has succeeded ; which is an admirable providence.’ *Pascal*, sect. 10, 23.

travelling into *Egypt*, *Chaldea*, and *Phœniciathemselves*, or from conversing with those who did; such were *Minos*, *Lycurgus*, *Solon*, *Numa*, of whom this has been shewn particularly by learned men†: such was *Zoroaster* in the east, by some supposed to have been servant to *Ezra* †, by others to *Daniel* ‖; and such was *Pythagoras* his disciple*. The same end was pursued by *Socrates*, and his disciples §; who prepared

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† *Gale*, Court of Gent. Part i. B. iii. c. 9, &c. *Witsii* *Ægyptiaca*, L. iii. c. 13. *Clem. Alex. Strom.* passim. The same is acknowledged by the *Greeks themselves*. Vid. *Diod. Sic.* ap. *Euseb. Ev. Præp. Lib. x.* p. 480, &c. *Ed. Morell. Diog. Laert. Proœm.* pr. cum *Casaub.* et al. in loc. imprimis, *Æg. Menag. Obs. iii. 6.* Add *Young, Diff. Vol. I.* c. ult. *Leland, Advantage, &c.* Vol. I. Part i. c. 19. p. 439. note q. *Falster Amœnitat. philolog. c. 9.*

‡ *Hyde, Rel. V. P. c. 24* p. 314.

|| *Prid. Con. Vol. I.* p. 331. *Hyde, Rel. Vet. Pers. p. 314.* He is supposed to have been sometimes endowed with the spirit of prophecy, like *Balaam*, id. *ibid. c. 31.* p. 382, &c. What ground there is to believe that he clearly foretold the coming of *Christ*, may be seen in *Univers. Hist. Vol. II.* p. 218. Another prophecy, to the same purpose, occurs in p. 222. note R. *Prideaux* and *Moyle* agree in supposing that there must have been two persons of that name, in order to reconcile the *Greek* and *Persian Accounts*. [*Moyle's Works, Vol. II.* p. 63 and 75.] Others reckon six. Vid. *Buddei Eccl. Hist. Tom. I.* p. 349, &c. What resemblance there is between his history and that of *Moses*, may be seen in *Huet. Dem. Ev. Prop. iv. c. 5.* Concerning his writings, vid. *Fabric. Bibl. Gr. Lib. i. c. 36.* p. 242, &c. or *Bryant. Anal. of Ancient Mythol.*

* *Prid. Vol. I.* p. 213. *Univers. Hist. Vol. II.* p. 236. note Z, &c. *Witsius* supra. *Jacot de Philosophorum Doctrina, Oxon. 1769.*

§ *Opera* præsumtum fuit talem esse Socratem qualis erat, auctoritatemque ejus augeri, ne apud Græcos discrimen omne virtutis et vitii tandem extingueretur, et omnes in nefanda scelera certam ruerent; quod ne fieret oblitore et ipse Socrates, et plerique omnes illæ philosophorum sectæ, quæ ab illo tempore in Græcia ortæ sunt, atque ex ejus schola veluti prodierunt. Deinde cum tempus

the way for a more perfect reformation, by labouring to bring men to the knowledge of one supreme God, and the study of natural religion ; by teaching them *humility*, and in all probability, giving them hopes of an instructor from heaven ; as was observed above. The same thing was doing about the same time, by that celebrated *Socrates* of the *Chinese*, (as he is called) *Confucius* †. The same design was carried on by that remarkable dispersion of the *Jews* among all civilized nations, as observed likewise ; and by the communication of their sacred books ; which had been translated into the most common language, and many copies of which were in common hands, ready to be examined * : when at the same time men were both qualified, and disposed to examine them by the increase of general learning, and philosophy ; which must help greatly to polish and improve their minds, notwithstanding all its imperfections abovementioned ; the very discovery of which imperfections, was like-

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tempus advenit, quo cœlestem plane doctrinam, qua cultus omnis ille superstitiosus Ethuicorum sublatus est, Deus per Christum in terras demisit, utilem operam veritati philosophia navavit ; ex ea enim Ethnici eruditiores, cum intelligere cœpissent fallas esse majorum suorum religiones, multo facilius postea ad religionem Christianam sunt adducti ; quam in rem docti scriptores Christiani, ex ipsius philosophiaæ arce, arma in Ethnicos nacti sunt. *Cleric. Silv. Phil. c. 3. sect. 7. p. 216.* See an *Essay*, attempting to shew, that *Socrates* was a kind of prophet to the Gentiles ; and divine inspiration not confined to the Jewish nation, and *Rev. Ex. with Cand.* Vol. III. c. 3.

† *Vid. Burnet. Arch. Phil. p. 20. Cleric. Silv. Phil. p. 214.* He is supposed to have been acquainted with the Jewish religion. See *Young's Dissert.* Vol. I. p. 293.

* *Vid. Walton, Apparat. B. Polyglott. sect. 9. Part iii. or Allix. B. ii. c. 25. or Univ. Hist. Vol. 4. B. ii. c. 1. p. 40.*

wise no inconsiderable argument of its improvement. They had time to digest the precepts, and instructions of their own sages, as well as to become acquainted with the history of the Jews. Superstition of all kinds gradually wore off, and arts and sciences succeeded; which naturally excite, and enliven the genius of any people; and open a free communication with others; and these were then in great perfection; as is too notorious to need particular proof. Nor can what is here said, be thought to prove inconsistent with that remarkable degeneracy, and corruption mentioned under the former head; if we reflect how often, in common cases, the same persons who, as to genius and abilities, are the most capable of apprehending and applying instruction, and in that sense, best fitted to receive it; are yet, in another sense, *i. e.* in point of ingenuity, and inclination, as little disposed to admit some branches of it; (or who in understanding may be arrived at very great perfection, when their morals are at a crisis in the other extreme;) on which account they stand in still greater need of a regular course of discipline, and such a juncture may be a very proper one to administer it, and lay a good foundation for their improvement in both these respects*.

Thus

* I leave it to the judgment of the reader, whether what is affirmed above be saying, that a greater degree of wickedness, and a greater degree of wisdom overspread the face of the earth at that time, and that they both were at the same time universal; as is intimated by a certain author. Letter to Whiston, p. 56.

Thus were mankind in general trained up, and ripe for a new dispensation ; as ready to attend to something of that kind ; as able to perceive, and reap the benefit of it, when it should be offered ; their curiosity was raised, and their capacity suited to any kind of religious enquiries : nor was it at *Athens* only, that they spent their time in *telling or hearing some new thing* ; science and literature had made considerable progress westward ; and every where the minds of men were enlarged, together with their commerce.

And thus all things conspired to bring the world on towards a state of MATURITY ; and at the same time, the circumstances of it were such as remarkably contributed to spread all kinds of knowledge in the most expeditious and effectual manner. The *Roman empire* had been growing up to that vast extent, which it reached under *Augustus* ; and had united the several governments of which it consisted under one head ; and settled itself in a general tranquillity : it had carried its language, and arts, almost as far as its arms ; had opened a correspondence, and established a commerce, between most parts of the then known world ; from whence intelligence was quickly conveyed to *Rome*, and orders dispatched from thence*. *Judea* the place where the *sun of righte-*

* The institution of *posts* among the *Romans* is generally attributed to *Augustus* ; though we read of them before, on some occasions among the *Perians*, *Herodot.* viii. 98. *Xen. Cyr. Lib.* viii. *Ephes* iii. 13. and viii. 10. vid. *Briffon. de R. P.* p. 147. comp. *Campbell politic survey*, v. 2. p. 254, &c.

righteousness was to arise, had just been reduced to a Roman province†, whereby regular accounts were taken of all remarkable transactions in it, by the Roman governors‡; and appeals lay from thence to Cæsar: and by this means the fame of an extraordinary teacher of a new religion might be published, over all the civilized parts of the world; and its professors be much better enabled to advance and propagate it, than could have been expected under any other constitution of the world before that time||: If true, it must by these means soon gain ground, and appear to be so; if false, as soon be silenced, and confuted.

For, Thirdly, this age was the best qualified to examine the evidence of such a revelation; to confirm its truth, and convey it down to posterity. It was, compared with the foregoing, a learned, curious, and inquisitive age, as we have seen; and therefore like to be more sceptical, and cautious in things of this nature; not so easy to be imposed upon, or apt

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† See Lardner, Cred. of G. H. B. i. c. 10. sect. 10.

‡ See an account of their *acta*, in Pearson on the Creed, Art. 4. fin. There is a whole week of the *Acta Diurna Senatus*, published from *Locke* by *Grævius ad Sueton, Cæs.* sect. 20. not. p. 35. *Amst.* 1697. which if genuine, is very remarkable.

|| To which we may add, *Mr. Weston's* observation; viz. that by the great extent and union of this empire; when the head of it once became a convert to Christianity, that religion would immediately spread through a large part of the world; as was the case in fact. *Enquiry into the Rejection of Christian Miracles*, p. 110, &c.—And it is no less observable, that Constantine did not become a thorough convert, till the whole Empire was united under himself, upon the death of *Licinius*, vid. *Mosheim, de Reb. Christ.* p. 976, &c.

to run into every wild religious project. There were men every where ready to confute and expose the *Christian* institution, had it contained any thing either false or frivolous ; absurd, or immoral ; if it had consisted of either enthusiasm, or imposture ; or any mixture of each. At that time the many sects and factions in the world had whetted themselves by contention, and were perpetual spies upon each other : so that no considerably new form of religion could gain ground among them, without being thoroughly sifted by the adverse parties. The *Pharisees* and *Saduces*, the *Stoicks* and *Epicureans*, were subtle disputers ; and all of them eager enough to oppose the *Christians*. The world had then also sufficient knowledge of the powers of nature, to be able to judge of *miracles* ; and distinguish them from any uncommon appearance in it, or any effect of art (c). Prophecy had

(c) It is not my design to enter into the late controversy about the causes, why so many Heathens for a long time paid so little regard to the *Christian* miracles, though they are allowed to have been competent judges of them. I shall only observe here, that numbers were in fact convinced of their reality, and in a great measure converted by them, as appears from the great stress, which some of these converts laid on them afterwards in their defences of Christianity : and as to others, 1. They might allow them to be true ; yet on account of the old intercommunity of deities, and multiplicity of dæmons, for some time draw no consequence from them, in prejudice to their own way of worship. 2. Multitudes of the like nature reported among themselves, might make others at a distance be looked on as less extraordinary. 3. The atheistic notions prevalent among some who had the best opportunity of being informed, might lead them to reject all such on principle. 4. Their usual way of attempting to account for these from such an unmeaning cause as *magic*, must, in a great degree, defeat the effects which they would otherwise have

had been for some time withdrawn from the *Jews*; which must make them at first more shy, and suspicious

have had upon them. 5. The numberless false ones of all kinds propagated over the pagan world, which then began to be seen through, and which had just brought the whole system into dispute; might induce them to view all others in the same light. Beside the common prejudices which opposed all the gospel evidences in conjunction, each of these reasons, no doubt, had its weight in overbalancing every one particularly, so far as reasoning was concerned; especially the last. And yet it would be no very difficult thing to shew, that they reasoned extremely ill upon the point. For as the multitude of fabulous miracles reported amongst them could be no warrant for their disbelieving those ancient, original ones, wrought among the *Patriarchs* and *Jews*, (of which their own were only so many awkward imitations;) but rather on the contrary, were a confirmation of their truth; (see above p. 78.) so they were far from having any ground sufficient to reject such as were undeniably performed in their own times, unless they had others of equal authority and importance to confront them with; which I apprehend was very far from being the case: though such a series of *lying wonders* might easily produce a very strong prejudice against all other wondrous things, how differently soever circumstanced; and hinder men from duly attending to this difference of circumstances, (as indeed we find it did with several) since any mixture of trifling, spurious, impertinent ones, is ever apt to prejudice and detract from the true; how far soever this be from any justification of the abovementioned conduct, which proper care and impartiality in most of them might have prevented. This is all, I apprehend, that can be fairly deduced from such an event; and this, methinks, instead of leading us rashly to receive or to reject all miracles promiscuously, or hindering us from ever looking into the foundation and authority of each; should rather teach us to be very willing at all times to have both of them examined by any hand; and carefully endeavour to distinguish these two kinds from one another, in order to prevent the like thing happening to some even amongst ourselves. Among other unbelievers, *Chubb* lays hold of this objection, though he has it but by hearsay. Posth. Works, Vol. II. p. 221, 225. The same is often repeated by *Hume*, and well answered by *Adams*, Ess. p. 102, 110. and by *Middleton* himself, Pref. &c. to Let. from *Rome*, p. 86, &c.

As to the *propriety* of this proof, notwithstanding all those bars to its reception, see *Weston's Dissertations*, p. 352, &c.

That.

cious of any new pretences to inspiration*. *Oracles* began to cease among the *Gentiles*, by being despised,
and

That very much of the fabulous, romantick taste which abounded in many Christian writers, down to the fifth, and some following Centuries, might be derived from their old Heathen acquaintance, among whom some of the most eminent historians and philosophers often give no less remarkable and perfectly parallel specimens of the most senseless superstition and credulity, may be seen in *Lardner's collection of Jewish and Heathen Testimonies*. V. 4. *passim*. See more particularly the Articles of *Zosimus* and *Damascius*.

That no real *miracle* was ever worked, either by evil spirits or evil men, in direct opposition to a Divine Revelation, is fully proved both from reason and scripture, by *Farmer* in his excellent dissertation on that subject: who has also fairly shewn, that all the embarrassment and inconsistency in the ancient and modern advocates for the truth of Christianity is founded on the contrary supposition; and it seems hard to conceive how that ingenious writer, who saw so clearly into the vulgar prejudices on that head, and has contributed so largely to the removal of them, should be himself so deeply involved in one of the like nature, as to bear testimony to the existence and operation of human souls departed; which notion of separate spirits he so well proves to have been the ground of all the heathen dæmonology, and all which Dæmons he has no less clearly shewn from scripture to be mere nullities that have neither *life* nor *action*; that neither know, nor do; nor are any thing real: [V. essay on the *Demoniacs*, p. 232, &c.] Contenting himself (as should seem) with the common answer to those numerous texts, which affirm this total insensibility and inefficiency of all such entities in the most absolute terms, by confining them to a sense merely *relative*; viz. that they have no *corporeal* life, or action: which is no great discovery, since it is included in the very supposition of them;—that they *know not any thing*, nor have a *thought* of any thing which concerns the present world: Though it is not very easy to comprehend what could be a more interesting object of their contemplation, than the things acted on that theatre where they have borne their part, and for which they are to give a strict account; notwithstanding their present inability to appear on it any longer; or while they retain any kind of memory, how they should entirely

* We may add, that the ceasing of this, as well as of *miracles*, for a time, would be a means of raising greater surprise among the

and generally neglected ; *divination* of all kinds was brought into contempt : and though they were sufficiently desirous of some better light in matters of religion, than what their own philosophy afforded them, as was observed above ; yet from the many false lights, which had been already held forth to them, and which had only served to mislead and bewilder them, they rather began to despair of finding any true one. Tired out with wandering through the various mazes of error and uncertainty, the very wisest of them gave up all such pretended guides ; and looked

upon

tirely forgot every circumstance relative to their old mansion, as some writers seem to allow ; and they might with equal reason admit what the scriptures no less plainly assert, viz. that in *death there is no remembrance at all*, even of God himself. But how far this worthy author may be concerned in these reflections, or what way he would take to avoid the foregoing, and like difficulties, were he pressed with them, I shall not pretend to determine, since he has been so brief upon this point, wherein I am sorry to be obliged to differ from him, in any respect.

[†] *Dubium non est quin haec disciplina et ars Augurum evanescit jam et vetustate et negligentia.* Cic. de Leg. L. ii. c. 13.

the Jews upon the revival of both ; and of procuring more attention, and regard to the person, who should again appear to have really the gift of them. ‘ Gifts granted to the disciples of our Saviour, which none had been partakers of since the time of *Malachi* ; God having so ordered it, that the desires of the Jews might be the more inflamed for the *Messiah’s* coming ; as also that, upon his coming, he might the more easily be discerned.’ *Allix. Reflect. Part iv. p. 272.* How far revelation ceased from the time of *Malachi* ; and what reasons are assignable for it, may be seen in *Vitrina, Observ. Sac. L. v. c. 6.* — 14.

How the return of a miraculous power among the Jews, at the pool of *Bethesda*, might prepare them for expecting the *Messiah*, together with the reason for their concealing the fact afterwards, upon the same power’s ceasing ; see *Clagett on Joh. v. 4. Comp. Whitby, ibid.*

upon the whole story of revelation a sa cheat. Thus men were sufficiently guarded against any new imposition, though ever so well supported by wit, policy, or learning. Nor would they, surely, be less averse to one appearing in such a mean form, and with such slender recommendations, as the *Christian*;—so destitute of aid from human wisdom, and subtlety;—so seemingly below what they had hitherto been entertained with by their teachers;—stript of all that pomp and ornament, which attended the *Jewish* institution;—that art and eloquence, which adorned each system of philosophy;—a scheme, advanc'd without all these, or against them;—consisting of a few plain rules of life; and these so strictly pure, and perfect, as equally to strike at the corrupt *Scribe*, and *Philosopher*: and therefore such as must needs be to the one, a *stumbling block*, and to the other, *foolishness*;—delivered for the most part occasionally and incidentally;—without any set formal method;—in the most simple, unaffected manner;—by mean, unletter'd obscure persons;—in full opposition to all the reigning passions, prejudices, and interests of the learned and great*: under all these, and the like dif-

* ‘ Tis very remarkable concerning all the prophecies of the *New Testament*, as one intrinsic character or mark of the truth and divine authority of the whole, that whereas impostors always, and enthusiasts generally, in setting up any new doctrines, make it their busines to raise the expectation of their followers, and to flatter their imaginations with promises of great success; and of God's interposing in some extraordinary manner to bring into their hands the power and dominion of this present world; our

disadvantages, which are well known to have attended the *Christian* religion in its infancy ; if at such a time, and in such circumstances, it was able to support itself, and make its way in the world ; and yet be all an imposition, both upon the senses, and the reason of mankind ; in what a strange situation must mankind have been, in both of these respects ! How totally different from what they have ever been before, or since ! How will the sons of scepticism who are so apt to stumble, at each little difficulty, which attends the present plan, in common with all other dispensations ; be able to get over this grand one, which has no parallel in history ? On the other hand, how fully may each fair enquirer satisfy himself, whence such a system of religion, must have ultimately derived its origin ? How soon will an impartial state of the case afford to him the same conviction that it did to them of old, and shew the whole to be nothing less than the *power of God, and the wisdom of God.* Each of these obstacles to its reception, gives the strongest attestation to it, when once seriously approved of, and embraced ; and all together must, when duly attended to, gain it the highest credit and esteem ; and be a standing evidence, both of its

our Lord's promises, on the contrary, are all of a spiritual nature ; promises of a proper reward for virtue in a future and an heavenly state ; but that at present, what his true disciples had to expect was *persecution and sufferings* of all kinds.—Nay, what is still more remarkable, and more essentially contrary to the spirit both of imposture and enthusiasm, he foretells the greatest, and most extensive, and most lasting *corruptions* of his own religion.'—Dr. Clarke, Serm. lxi. on Matt. xxiv. 12.

its truth and excellence ; a sufficient answer to all suspicions that can be raised, from the prevalence of any fable, or imposture in some other age ; from what may have been introduced in a manner directly contrary to this ;—by other kinds of persons ; and in very different times ;—by policy, or persecution ;—in days of bigotry, blindness, and superstition.

It has been frequently insinuated by such as are no friends to revelation, that there are certain seasons when any thing will pass upon the world, under the notion of religion †: which observation has, indeed, a good deal of truth in it, with regard to the fond admission of things marvellous, and extraordinary : But from all that is gone before, I think it sufficiently appears, that this age was by no means liable to such an imputation ; that it can neither be charged with ignorance nor credulity ; that it cannot be suspected of any particular disposition to receive such a doctrine as that of *Christianity*, and from such hands ; were it not manifestly true, and of divine authority : and that therefore the strict examination into the grounds thereof, at its first propagation ; and the full conviction which each party must have had, before it would be able to gain admittance with them, might, one would think, serve for all succeeding generations ; at least, must be allowed to add one of the strongest confirmations to it.

Lastly,

† Voltaire's Letters, L. vii. To the same purpose were some parts in the life of Homer, 1st Ed. and several passages occur in Bayle's Dict. and the *Characteristicks*.

Lastly, this age was the best qualified to hand the foregoing evidence down to posterity. As it was an inquisitive, and discerning one, so it was no less lettered, and historical. The *Augustan* age is remarkable to this day for the number of its writers. There is none better known; scarcely any, of which so full and so particular accounts are given. The *Roman* empire had been settled; and the minds of its chief members turned from arms and action, to works of genius and speculation: fond of celebrating its conquests, and recording its glory, they gave themselves up to the study of eloquence, and good writing. Their chronology had been lately reformed, and exact reviews taken of the most distant provinces; with the number, names, employments, quality, and estates, of their inhabitants, (c); and all remarkable acts and occurrences carefully registered, and regularly transmitted to *Rome*; the capital of the world. In such a state of affairs, no great event could easily lie concealed, or be long called in question: At such a time therefore, was it not highly proper to introduce this new scene upon the stage of the world; whereby its aera must be fixed beyond future controversy? Had *Christ* come in an obscure, fabulous age, by this time we might perhaps have doubted, whether ever there was any such person; at least, whether any thing told relating to him could be depended on. It was by no means

there-

(c) See *Lardner Credib.* B. iii. sect. 2.

therefore fit, that a thing of this consequence should be done in a corner, and left to vulgar report, and uncertain tradition; to be soon dropt again; or blended, and disguised with fiction, and romance: this then commenced in an age of the world, when the copiousness and certainty of its history serv'd, both to spread it more universally, and preserve it more securely: *when many took in hand to set forth a declaration of those things, which were most surely believed among them*, for the use of their friends, both *Jew and Gentile* (†); whereby we have more ample and authentic memoirs of church history, than could ever have been expected before that period *; and whereby the time when, the place where, and persons under whom, the most material occurrences happened, were ascertain'd by writers of different nations, by *Romans, Jews, and Greeks.*

These several circumstances conspire to bring the mission of *Christ* very near the time in which he came. There is one more, which seems to fix it precisely to that period; at least will shew, that it could not have been sooner, consistently with the common course of providence, and moral government of the world; admitting likewise the particular scheme already specified, *viz.* of his descending from the *Jews*; I mean, the circumstance of their being then in so great sub-
jection

(†) See Dr. Owen's *Observations on the Gospels, passim.*

* This is to be understood with an exception to the thirty years between *Nero* and *Trajan*; to which time all the common complaint of want of ecclesiastical writers ought, to be limited. The cause of this is assigned by *Vitrina*, Obs. Sacr. Liv. iv. c. 7. sect. 9. p. 904, &c. Why we have no larger accounts of the *Apostles*, see *Hartley*, Obs. on Man, Vol. II. p. 121.

jection to the *Roman* government, as to have the power of life and death, in most cases, taken from them (D).

By all that we know of that generation, we have reason to believe, that if they had been at liberty, they would have cut him off, as soon as ever he appeared to correct their gross errors, and reprove their many

(D) *John xviii. 31.* How far this was so, see *Lardner*, Cred. B. i. c. 2. sect. 5. Part vii. p. 49. &c. 2d Edit. The particular instance of St. Stephen's murder, which is brought to prove the contrary by the authors of *Univ. Hist.* [Vol. IV. p. 236. not. R.] does not seem sufficient for that purpose; but rather looks like a tumultuous *act* of the zealots, though his trial might be begun regularly; [see *Basnage*, B. v. c. 2. sect. 8. or *Doddrige*, Vol. III. sect. 15. p. 110.] and the case of St. *Paul*, mentioned in the same Book, [note O. p 257.] seems to shew, not that they pretended to an *executive* power in his time; but that even their *judicial* one was sometimes interrupted, to prevent the like outrages. This point seems to be pretty exactly stated in *Millar's Ch. Hist.* c. 7. p. 536. Comp. *Basnage*, ibid. sect. 7. and *Whithy* on *John xviii. 31.* or *Krebsi Observ.* in N. T. ex *Josepho*. p. 64. 155, &c. One would think, their own judgment of the thing might be sufficiently inferred from *Hieros. Sanhedr.* fol. 18. col. 1. *Traditio est, quadraginta annos ante excidium templi ablatum fuisse jus vitae et mortis*, et ib. fol. 242. *Quadraginta annis ante vaslatum templum ablata sunt judicia capitalia ab ISRAELE.* comp. *Allix*, Judgment of the *Jewish Church*, &c. p. 49. Though *Lightfoot* is of a different opinion, and produces several instances in confirmation of it. [Op. Lat. Vol. II p. 371.] *Bischof* [B. Lect. c. 6.] has made it very probable, that the *Jewish* magistrates had often, even in those times, the power of inflicting capital punishments allowed them; but yet he grants, that they were often prevented by the *Roman* governors; [ib. p. 225.] 'tis plain, their state was about that time in great confusion; and it appears, that they durst not exert such a power, upon the occasion abovementioned; nor, in their then circumstances, could at last have compassed our Saviour's death in any regular, judicial way, without application to a *Roman* governour; which comes to pretty near the same thing, with respect to the main part of the present argument. Comp. *Doddr.* Vol. II. p. 545. 547. 565. & III. p. 110. 345. 366. *Ottii Spicel.* ex *Josepho* p. 225. or *Pearse com.* on *Joh. xviii. 31.*

many abuses in religion ; to disappoint their fond hopes of temporal grandeur, wealth, and power ; and humble their spiritual pride, by reducing them to a level with all such as feared God, of every nation under heaven. And accordingly, when they saw he was not a *Messiah* for their purpose *, we find them immediately resolved to seize and dispatch him ; as they would undoubtedly have done, if they had then had sufficient power : but being, in a great measure, deprived of it, they were obliged to have recourse to stratagem ; continually laying in wait for something to accuse him of to the *Romans* ; and trying all methods to draw him into any act, which might be construed treason, or disaffection to their government : on which account also we find him behaving with so much caution, and reserve before them ; keeping in private, as much as was possible, and consistent with the end for which he came † ; charging his disciples not to make him known ‡ ; moving from place to place in order to avoid any tumults, or extraordinary concourse of the people || ; preventing his being proclaimed

* How soon their rulers perceived this, and what a quite different conduct it produced at first in them, and that of the common people, toward him, see *Lardner Cred.* Vol. I. p. 288, &c. Or *Benson Life of Christ*, c. 8. sect. 5. p. 289. The disappointment of the latter also, on their seeing him given up to gross reproaches and grievous sufferings, may sufficiently account for that remarkable change of their behaviour towards him at last, as is explained by *Farmer, Enquiry into Christ's Temptation*, p. 98.

† *Luke v. 16. John viii. 1. xii. 54.*

‡ *Matt. xii. 16.*

|| *Sæpe Christus fugiebat hominum turbam dum lacum trahiceret, forte ut vitaret omnem tumultus speciem, utque obviam iret sedi-*

claimed the *Messiah* ||; and declining any direct answer, when questioned about it §; till he had finished the work of his ministry; and fulfilled every thing in the Scriptures concerning himself (ε). No former age

to show such a number of prophecies of the birth of

seditionibus, quas homines rerum novarum cupidi, quos multos tunc temporis in Iudea fuisse notum est, potuissent ejus nomine abundantes concitare. Si magna hominum imperitum multitudo diu congregata fuisset, facile contra Romanos, quorum jugum iniquo animo ferebant, moliri aliquid potuisset, praesertim cum Jesum esse Messiam credere aut suspicari coeperant. Maximi autem erat momenti evangelio exorienti omnes turbas turbarumque vel ipsam suspicionem vitari; parati enim erant primores Iudeorum Christum aduersare, apud procuratorem Caesaris, qui hujusmodi delationibus accipiendis jam nimium propensus erat. Vide historiam administrationis Pilati apud Josephum. Cleric. in Matt. viii. 18. Comp. infra p. 32.

|| *Mark* iii. 12. *Luke* iv. 41.

§ *John* x. 24. xi. 4, &c.

(ε) See *Locke*, Reason of C. p. 487, &c. fol. 3d Ed. [or *Lardner*, Cred. B. i. c. 5. p. 286.] where may be found a full answer to the *Moral Philosopher's* observation on this subject, Vol. III. p. 189. who concludes, as is usual, with a very false account of the matter, viz. that ‘our Saviour all along from first to last, [*Witness Matt. xxvi. 64. Mar. xiv. 62. Luke xxii. 70. John xviii. 37.*] disclaimed the Messiahship among them;’ i. e. the Jews. Comp. *Whitby* on *Matt.* ix. 30.

The same account serves also to confute the idle observation made upon these passages, by the author of *Christianity not founded on argument*; who from thence infers, that one Lord could have no such meaning as to convince by his miraculous works, p. 48. no such intention as to prove his own truth, and character, by these instances of his power, ib. in full contradiction to those many other passages, where he expressly appeals to the same works, as direct proofs of his divine commission, *Matt.* xi. 4. 5. 21. *John* v. 36. x. 25. 38. xiv. 11. xv. 24, &c. See *Randolph's Answ.* p. 169, 170.

The same is likewise a reply to this author's objection against the truth of christianity, from Christ's not opening his commission before the Jewish rulers, [ibid. p. 48, &c.] so far as he has represented the case truly; for which see *Benson's Answ.* Part iii. Dial. iii. p. 196, &c.

The same observation may be applied, with no less force, against

of the *Jews* probably was wicked enough, to have withstood so many evident proofs of his being the true *Messiah*; to have rejected him, and been his *betrayers, and murderers*; and thereby to have accomplished the prophecies, and executed the purpose of God, in sending his Son to die for all the world: this generation was so thoroughly such*, as to have done it with too much precipitancy; unless restrained by a superior power: we may add, and one that entertain'd more just notions of religious toleration†; which makes its subjection to the *Roman* government in this respect also, to constitute the **FULNESS OF TIME**; and affords a circumstance particularly suitable to the coming of *Christ*.

And

against our Saviour's doing the like before the *Roman* governors, which stuck so much with *Woolston*; [Exact Fitness. Pref. &c.] to which we may add, that his addressing himself in form at any time to either of these powers; must in all probability have been turned to a great objection against the truth of his mission, whether they had, or had not received him; the first would have been wholly attributed to state policy; the latter might have been urged as implying some extraordinary defect in his credentials: as is well observed by *Clagett* in the case of his not appearing in public; and before the *Jewish Rulers*, after his *Resurrection*. Posth. Sermons, Vol. I. serm. 1. See also *Benson*, ib. p. 216, &c. So that had the whole been conducted in any way materially different from what it was, the case would, as far as now appears, have been no better for those times in which it was transacted; and much worse for all future ages.

* V. *Lightfoot*, Op. Lat. 317, 325, &c.

† During that space would be the best opportunity for *Christ's* disciples, to promote the interest of his gospel, the *Jewish* people having not the power of life and death in their own hands, and the *Roman Procurators*, were not disposed to give any men disturbance, upon account of difference of opinion in religious matters. *Lardner*. Credibility pt. II. Vol. xiii. p. 153.

And though this very remarkable wickedness of the *Jews*, in some measure counterbalanced all their other qualifications for attending to the *Christ* when he came ; and debarred the generality of them from accepting the benefits of his coming ; yet it concurred equally to carry on the same design of providence, for the common good of the world : even the vice, and folly of them who were induced to reject him, contributed to the advantage and improvement of those amongst them, who had so much virtue and wisdom left, as to receive him ; which great numbers of them did †, notwithstanding the vile policy of their rulers : and this policy soon brought on that very thing which they were seeking to avoid by it (§), the dissolution of their state ; which having now fully answered the ends it was designed for, gave way to that universal system of religion which was to comport with each political establishment throughout the world ; and its remains served equally to the same purpose, in bearing every where such evident marks of the divine displeasure, as could not but be taken notice of, together with the causes of their punishment (†). And thus did the *fall of Israel* become

the

† V. *Jenkin*, Vol. II. c. 32. p. 497.

§ *Job.* xi. 48.

† ‘Had the *Jews* been all converted by JESUS CHRIST, we should only have had doubtful witnesses ; and had they been quite destroyed we should have had none at all.’ *Pascal*. *Thoughts*, p. 191. Comp. id. p. 89, 90. ‘Istos inimicos meos ipsos qui me occiderunt noli tu occidere. Maneat genus *Judaorum*; certe vieta est a *Romanis* ; certe deleta civitas eorum ; non admittuntur ad

the riches of the world, and the rise of a new, and more noble dispensation; communicated to all nations, and by this means most effectually confirmed in every succeeding generation: of which below.

Thus have we considered some of the most remarkable circumstances, attending the age of CHRIST's advent; which make it appear to be the *fulness of the time*, and fitteſt for ſuch a dispensation †.

And upon the whole; we may observe, that from the very beginning of the world, mankind have always had ſufficient means of being instructed in religion; and that its feveſal dispensations have all along been ſuited to their reſpective circumſtances and caſpacities, ſo far as can be learnt from thoſe very brief accounts that are left us of their history; from whence 'tis also probable, that if we had more full ones, we ſhould ſee this more clearly.

We find that in the INFANT state of the world, mankind were led, as it were, by the hand in matters of religion; directed by viſible appearances, from
Heaven

ad civitatem ſuam *Judæi*, et tamēn *Judæi* ſunt.—Manent cum ſigno; nec ſic viciſſunt ut a victoribus abſorberentur, Non ſine eau.a. Per omnes gentes diſpersi ſunt *Judæi* teſtes iniquitatis ſue et veritatis noſtræ. Ipsi habent Codices de quibus prophetatus eſt Christus; et nos tenemus Christum. Et ſi forte aliquando aliquis Paganus dubitaverit cum ei dixerimus prophetias de Christo, quarum evidentiam obſtupescit, et admirans putaverit a nobis eſſe conſcriptas; de codicibus *Judæorum* probamus quia hoc totum ante prædictum eſt. Videte quemadmodum de inimicis noſtris alios confundimus inimicos! Auguſt. in Psal. lviii. ver. 11. Tom. viii. p. 716. Comp. Id. in Psal. xli. et infra note R. p. 184.

† Moſt of theſe circumſtances, are well ſum'd up by Dr. Robertson, in his Serm. on Col. ii. 26. See the Scotch Preacher, vol. 1.

Heaven on every proper occasion ; fed with a present portion of this world's goods, and cherished with temporal prospects. The doctrines of religion, and modes of worship, were few and plain ; agreeable to their imperfect notions of things ; and suited to their simplicity of manners* : and when these were once taught, and instituted among some principal heads of families, they might, through the longevity of men in those days, be easily held entire amongst them, and handed down by *tradition*. When mankind had multiplied, and were dispersed over all the face of the earth ; and *traditional religion* (notwithstanding the frequent revivals of it by particular revelations) began to be corrupted, and defaced ; and as soon as a better way of preserving and propagating the notices of it was discovered†, viz. by the invention, or rather the revelation, of letters (F);

God

* See Part iii.

† See Conybeare Def. of Rev. Rel. p. 404, &c.

(*) Gale [Court of the Gent. P. i. B. i. c. 10. sect. 4.] brings many testimonies, both from *Heathen* and *Christian* writers, to prove that *Moses* was the original introducer of letters. See also Gen. Dict. Vol. IV. p. 417. G. I. Vossius Aristarch. 1. 9. and an *Essay upon Literature*, proving, that the two tables written by the finger of God in Mount Sinai, was the first writing in the world. Lond. 1726. From whom it appears, how much letters must have contributed to prevent the increase of idolatry ; at least the advancing men into the number of Gods ; by preserving a more particular account of their first rise and following actions. Comp. Univers. Hist. p. 720. N. T. Gusset Com. Ebr. p. 7, 8. and Dauibuz on Rev. Prelim. Disc. p. 2, &c. Which last writer shews, that it was as necessary then to give the *Israelites* letters, to supply the use of all their symbols, and take off their inclination to symbolical idolatry ; as it was afterwards to communicate the art of printing, in order to correct a no less gross idolatry in the *Christian*

God is pleased to afford more clear and ample ones; he singles out a person particularly eminent for piety and obedience; takes him under his immediate protection, by way of positive covenant; communicates himself expressly to him, and makes him a means of discovering that knowledge to other nations; and reforming the religion of every country into which he was sent. The same favour is continued to some of his posterity, and with the same design; they are removed to and fro; and every where miraculously preserv'd and multiplied; are united under a *theocracy*, and have a *written law* given them; consisting of

the world, by transmitting all useful knowledge much more easily, and extensively, than could have ever been done before by writing, ib. p. 12. ‘Moses, who was skilled in the learning of the Egyptians, without doubt understood their manner of writings; and if the letters represented animals, he must have composed a new alphabet, when the law forbade them to make the likeness of any thing; that is, we are to suppose, of any living creature, or of any of those luminaries that were worshipped in the Heathen world.’ Pococke’s Description of the East, Vol. I. p. 228. Comp. Conjectural Observations on the Origin and Progress of Alphabetic Writing, printed A. D. 1772. Many proofs of God’s having communicated the art of alphabetical writing first to *Moses*, as well as reasons for that conduct, have lately been set forth by Worthington, Essay, c. 8. But this point seems to be brought to the highest probability by Winder, Hist. of Knowl. Vol. II, Add Bryant, Anal. v. 3. p. 123. To this may be added Bp. Clayton’s account of the *written mountains* mentioned in a Journal from Grand Cairo to Mount Sinai, which, as the learned editor observes, contain in all probability the *ancient Hebrew character*; which the Israelites, having learned to write it at the time of giving the law from Mount Sinai, improved themselves with practising on these mountains, during their forty years abode in the wilderness, p. 34. note (a). Comp. p. 34, &c. et c contr. Hottinger in Wagenseil, p. 432. Montague, Ph. Trans. No. vii. for 1766. Vid. etiam E. Bernardi Tabula Orbis eruditissima Literatura a charactere Samaritico deducitur, &c. auctam a C. Morton, 1759.

of the most perfect rules of life that their then state, and temper, would admit of; containing a body of precepts opposite, in most parts, to the superstitious and idolatrous practices of the people round them: they are intrusted with a history of the original state of the world, and all past dispensations of religion in it; together with predictions of the future; more especially of that great one, under the *Messiah*, who was to descend from one of their tribes, and whom they were taught to expect by numberless preparatory types*, and emblems, all tending to point him out more fully to them; and prepare the way for his reception. They become a mighty nation; are distinguished by extraordinary deliverances, and victories under their several governors: the fame of them,

* Dr. Barrington (after Sykes) seems to reject the notion of *types*, and will have the Jewish dispensation to be only 'such a representation of the gospel as would shew the analogy after the gospel took place, rather than presigure it before-hand.' *Essay on the several Dispensations*, &c. p. 46. [which likewise seems to have been the notion of Le Clerc, *Comm. on 1 Cor. x. 3, 4.*]

But is not this somewhat preposterous, by assigning such an use for it as was in a great measure unnecessary, when the more noble institution had in fact taken place, itself being *waxen old and ready to vanish away?* And how shall we able to reconcile this with the following account of the same author, p. 69? 'God afterwards erected this family [of Abraham] into an *earthly kingdom*, so constituted as to point out a better, and in many proper ways to *prepare* men, and *dispose* things for the establishment of it.' *De Typis V. Glass. Phil. Sacr. L. ii. Pr. i. Tr. 2. sect. 4. et Spilon. Ot. Theolog. de eorumdem usu et abusu, L. ii. p. 3. Comp. Div. Leg. B. vi. sect. 6. Newt. on the Apoc. c. ii. and Benson Dissert. introd. to Suppl. Paraphr. p. 35, &c. with Graham's serm. on Matt. iv. 17. p. 9.*

+ 'Here we may justly admire the singular providence of God, which thus made way for the propagation of knowledge over all the

them, and of their God †, spreads far and wide. To keep them duly attached to his worship, he raises up a succession of prophets, who cease not to exhort, and urge them to their duty ;—to reprove and correct them for their repeated breaches of it ;—to remind them of their dependance on that God, who had already done so great things for them ; and to assure them of still greater, on a performance of their duty ; as also to threaten them with the severest punishments, on their defection : which always came to pass accordingly ; and were dispensed in so very visible, and exemplary a manner, as could not but surprize, the nations round them ; and plainly enough discovered him to be, not only a God of the Jews, but the supreme Governour of the whole world ; and Lord of Heaven and Earth ; which was the principal end of all ; and to effect which, their prophets are often

the earth. *David* was God's chosen instrument for extending the Hebrew state to its greatest dimensions. And then, at a time when the nation was in the greatest extent of power and territory, and reached to and verged upon so many different countries ; so that more notice would be taken of what passed in that potent state ;—then, I say, *Solomon* was raised up, and endued with such extraordinary talents by God himself, to be the instrument of this greatest benefit to mankind. This prince's conspicuous and superlative wisdom drew the attention of the world ; and their curiosity led them into that flourishing country, where they might, among other entertaining things, have an ample opportunity of gaining a full knowledge of LETTERS, or alphabetical writing. This was discovered by *divine revelation* at first. But as the Hebrew nation had not been significant enough, to engage men to much attention to their arts or knowledge, God in his providence thought fit to raise up these two great successive princes into such a conspicuous point of light, to be the means of rendering the knowledge of LETTERS more general, and thereby of humanizing and improving all nations in the most useful sciences.' *Winder, Hist. of Knowl.* Vol. II. p. 59, 60.

often sent to foretel the fate of the neighbouring kingdoms, and to acquaint them with the knowledge of the most High. This is the great design, which was still carrying on; and which his own people, though they perversely oppose, and frequently endeavour to cross it, are yet obliged to execute, whether they will or not; and equally promote it by their successes, and their sufferings. They were to be like so much leaven, in the mass of mankind; and when they themselves were once thoroughly penetrated and prepared, he disperses them among all nations, to diffuse the same spirit, and contribute to the reformation of others: and 'tis observable, that the same long *captivity*, which cured them of their great proneness to idolatry, served also to distribute them over most parts of the world; and together with them, the knowledge and worship of the one true God, then deeply imprinted in their hearts (c).

When

(c) It has been observed, that the *Jews* were removed to *Babylon*, when that empire was in its most flourishing state, and most frequented by philosophers, [Young's Hist. Diff. Vol. I. p. 292.] who travelled thither from all parts, and thereby in a good measure became acquainted with the *Jewish* history; as many of them are supposed to have been. [See the authors above in note † p. 133.] And 'tis well known, that at the end of this *captivity*, the greatest part of the *Jews*, and those of the greatest eminence, staid behind, and settled in *Chaldea*, *Affyria*, and other eastern provinces; notwithstanding several decrees granted by the kings of *Persia* for their return; [Prid. Part i. B. iii. p. 136, &c. Univ. Hist. B. ii. c. 1. p. 5.] from whence 'tis probable, that some of their descendants were spred so far as the *East Indies*, where their posterity continues to this day; as appears from the accounts of many modern travellers. See *Hamilton's New account of the East Indies*, Vol. I. p. 321, &c. Edinb. 1727. and *Modern*

When at length the *Jews* had attained to some tolerable sense of religion, and were so firmly attached to it, as to be fit to communicate the same to the *Gentiles*; to whom they were by this time sufficiently known; and these also, by what they had heard of the *Jewish* prophets, and seen of their sacred books, together with their own improvements in science, were able to receive, and relish some more perfect institution; when both *Jew* and *Gentile*, had been prepared to expect a new revelation; when they began to want its aid, and were most sensible of their wants; and therefore like to be best disposed to accept, and apply the proper remedy: and when the state

Modern part of Univ. Hist. B. xviii. c. 7. sect. 22. note q. We have a remarkable passage to this purpose related by *Bundy*, in the preface to his translation of *Lamy's Apparatus Biblicus*, as follows: 'The Rev. Mr. *Long*, lately returned from *Fort St. George* in the *East Indies*, assures me, and gives me leave to declare it to the world from him, that the *Gentous* (a people in the *East*, who from their customs and other circumstances, are by the most judicious believed to be the descendants of those of the *Jewish* ten tribes who never returned from the *Babylonish captivity*) have a temple at *Chillembrum*, near *Porto Novo*, on the coast of *Coromandel*, which they call *Zuliman's temple*, which they resort to with the same devotion as the *Jews* formerly did to that at *Jerusalem*; and that it is divided into courts, in the same manner as *Pere Lamy's* is, and is built much after the same plan which is there given.' Comp. *Bernier's voyage to Surat*, &c. Collection of Voyages, &c. Vol. VIII. p. 237.

An account of *Jews* and *Jewish* customs discovered in *China*, *Bengal* and *Madagascar*, as also in *Africa* and *America* both North and South, may be seen in the authors referred to by *Jenkin*, Vol. I. c. 2: p. 104, &c. and many more in *Fabricius*, Lux. Ev. from c. 32. 50. or *Bagnage*, Hist. B. vi. and vii. where we have an ample account of their being spread over the four quarters of the world. Comp. *Travels of the Jesuits*, Vol. II. p. 27. note*, and p. 264, &c. or *Millar's hist. of the Ch.* c. 8. 9. and *Adair's hist. of American Indians*. 15—194.

state of the world was such, as most of all favoured the communication ; and helped to secure the continuance of it : when the dark, fabulous ages were well over ; and succeeded by one remarkably learned and historical : when arts, and sciences, and commerce, had extended themselves, together with the *Roman* empire, and language, over most parts of the known world ; and thereby opened a way for any new discovery, and enabled mankind, in general, with ease and expedition to search into, and thoroughly examine it : and more particularly, when that country which was to be the scene of all this, had just been reduced to a *Roman* province, and thereby exact accounts were taken of its state and inhabitants ; so that the person who was to work this great reformation there, could not be long hid from the rest of the world : when the government of it had likewise been put under such a form as was extremely suitable, and even necessary to the due exercise, and full execution of his ministry : in this period of the world *Christ* came ;—nor could he, as far as we can see, have come so seasonably and opportunely at any other.

Whoever attentively considers these several circumstances, though he may not perhaps allow every one of them ; yet he will, I believe, find something so remarkable in many ; especially in that extraordinary coincidence of so many ; as may induce him to think

think, that there might be very good reason for deferring this dispensation to so late a period.

And thus it appears that God has all along acted equally and impartially for the good of mankind, in matters of religion; though in very different manners, according to their different circumstances and capacities;—that his several dispensations have been gradually opened, so as regularly to rise out of, and improve upon each other;—and lastly, that the state of knowledge, and perfection in the world, has hitherto been increasing.

The like method will appear, to have been continued under Christianity itself; it was in its *infancy* in Christ's time; who communicated the things of it to his disciples, by little and little, as they were able to bear them*; beginning with the plainest, and most obvious; laying the foundation, and first principles, during his ministry, and conversation with them after his resurrection†; and leaving the more full opening of it till the descent of the *Holy Ghost*‡; which likewise led them gradually into several truths. For some

* *Mark iv. 33. Job. xvi. 12.* ‘The Christian Religion was not properly set up in the world during the life of Christ, though he was the illustrious and divine author and founder of it: and the reason is plain and obvious, viz. because many of the peculiar glories, duties, and blessings of it, as they are described in the Acts, and in the sacred Epistles, did really depend upon those facts which had no existence in Christ's own life time, viz. his death, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation.’ *Watt's Harmony of all the Religions which God ever prescribed*, c. 10.

† *Acts i. 3. Luke xxiv. 27, 44.*

‡ As to the *Fact*, see Bp. Gibson's 3d Part. Let. sect. 3, 4, and 6. For the *reasons* of it, see *Misc. Sac. Eff.* i. p. 157, &c.

time the apostles themselves were ignorant of *Christ's* true office ; and the spiritual nature of his kingdom. They could not conceive that he was to suffer for the whole world || ; they expected nothing but a temporal prince * ; and thought that his kingdom was to be confined to a remnant of the *Jews* †. Even after the descent of the *Holy Ghost*, St *Peter* stands in need of a particular revelation to convince him that the *Gentiles* were likewise to be admitted ‡ into the same covenant : the disciples are astonished, that on *them* also was poured out the gift of the *Holy Ghost* || ; and contend with him about it § ; and afterwards prevail on him and others of the Brethren to dissemble it **. Many yet insisted on the point of *circumcision* (†) ; and most of them concluded that *christianity*, and the world itself, would speedily come to an end ††. Which error might be permitted to continue in the church for some time, on account of that extraordinary courage and resolution, which it infused into the primitive *Martyrs*, and which help'd so very greatly

|| *Matth.* xvi. 22. *Luke* xviii. 31, 34.

* *Matth.* xx. 21, &c.

† *Act*s i. 6. and c. x. The use of this may be seen in *Div. Leg.* Vol. II. B. iv. sect. 6.

‡ *Act*s x. 6, &c. xi. 5, &c. v. *Benjon*, *Efl. on Inspir. Paraphr.* p. 319.

|| *Act*x. 45.

§ *Act*s xi. 2.

** *Gal.* ii. 11, 13.

(†) *Act*s xv. 1, 5.

†† See *Burnet*, *de Stat. Mort. et Ref.* c. 7. p. 145, &c. *Clarke*, *Serm.* 21. on *Job*. xxi. 22.

greatly to support them under all their trials, as well ^{as} to excite them to a more liberal distribution of their goods, *to all that had need.*

And though a much larger and more comprehensive view of the whole scheme was imparted by Christ himself, after his ascension, to St. Paul^{¶¶¶}, that chosen vessel; who was endowed with greater accomplishments, and a larger stock of learning, and who laboured more abundantly than they all*; yet perhaps it may be questioned, whether he also was not left in some degree of uncertainty about this last point (H), to which the *Δυσοντα* in several of his writings,

^{¶¶¶} Gal. i. 16, &c. See Misc. Sacr. Eff. ii. p. 40, &c. and *Locke's Synop. to Comm. on Ephes.*

Concerning the propriety of chusing this apostle at that particular time, see *Locke, Reasonableness*, p. 508. Works, Vol. II. 2d Ed.

What is meant by his *gospel*, and that it was not contradictory to what the other apostles had delivered, as is so frequently affirmed by *Morgan* and *Bolingbroke*, see *Locke on Rom.* xvi. 25. with *Whitby on Gal.* i. 7.

* 1 Cor. xv. 10.

(a) Comp. *Rom.* xiii. 11. *Locke*, ib. [contr. *Taylor* in loc. p. 352.] 1 Cor. i. 7. and xv. 51. 2 Cor. v. 2, 3, 4. and 1 Thess. iv. 15, 16, 17. with *Grotius*, and *Wahl's note* on the last place. Add *Grot. Append. ad Comm. de Antich.* Op. Tom. IV. p. 475. *Lowth on Inspir.* p. 225. 2d Ed. or *Benson Append. to Paraphr. on 1 Tim.* v. 23, &c. *Whiston on Rev. Cor.* 2. [contr. *Whitby*, 2d Disc. after 2 Ep. *Thess.*] and note μ. p. 265. Since, as our Saviour has declared, *of that day and that hour knoweth no man*, we have the less reason to be surprised, if its coming be spoken of indistinctly, and on some occasions represented in more general terms as being near at hand to all. See *Chandler*, on 1 Thess. iv. 15. 2 Thess. 2.

But if this notion seems too harsh, the difficulty may be solved otherwise more easily, upon a supposition that the time of each man's death is, in respect of himself, really contiguous to that of his

ings, taken notice of by St. Peter, [2 Ep. iii. 16.] are with great probability supposed to relate †.

In this respect, the *Christian* institution may be said to have been but in its *childhood*, even under the apostles. We find it for some time mixed with *Judaism* ‡; and subject to carnal ordinances: the apostles of the circumcision seem not to have any distinct knowledge of the general freedom from the ceremonial law *: St. Paul is forced to conceal his preaching
to

his resurrection.—A doctrine which not only St. Paul, but two other apostles also, St. James and St. Peter, have taught very expressly, and which appears to deserve a little more attention than is usually given to it. This point is very well proved by Taylor, ib. p. 354, 355, though he there seems to have declined entering into the ground of it. For which, see the last discourse here annexed.

† Vid. *Mill.* Proleg. *passim*, et *Whitby* in 2 Pet. iii. 16.

‡ *Indulgendum et dandum quid erat ingenio Legi Mosaicæ et Institutis Synagogarum assueto, donec tandem quidam ad altiorum deducti ætatem sponte hos apparatus moresque desererent.* Bohmer, de extraord. prim. Eccl. Statu. Ed. 2. Diss. xii. p. 420.

Ratio nascentis Ecclesiæ non permisit, ut eodem momento omnia emendantur quæ Scholis Judæorum accepta referenda, &c.
Id. ib. p. 428.

See *Edwards' Survey*, p. 598, &c. 'As to their outward way of living, they conformed themselves to the rest of the Jews, observed all the ceremonies of the law, even to the offering of sacrifice; which they continued to do as long as the temple was standing. And this is, what the fathers called, giving the synagogue an honourable interment.' Aug. Ep. 19. *Fleury, Manners of the Christians*, p. 31. Nay, fifteen bishops of *Jerusalem* in succession were circumcised, till the destruction of it under *Adrian*, according to *Eusebius*, Eccl. H. L. iv. c. 5. Comp. *Sulp. Sever.* L. ii. p. 142. Elz. *Tum Hierosolymæ non nisi ex circumcisione habebat ecclesia sacerdotem, &c.* But by this Emperors treatment of the Jews, their whole constitution civil and ecclesiastical was effectually dissolved. See note q. p. 182.

* *A. S. xxi. 26.* See *Benson, Hist. of first planting Christianity*, Vol. II. p. 209. where the reasons of this gradual discovery
are

to the *idolatrous Gentiles*, for several years †; a distinction of days ‡, of meats and drinks ||, and other legal ceremonies §, are observed, to gratify the *Jewish converts*; and avoid giving offence to weaker brethren **: they are obliged to comply with such in the toleration of many things burdensome to the flesh, and unprofitable as pertaining to the conscience; and the observance of some is judged necessary to be enjoined, or at least recommended to certain *proselytes*, by a public decree *, which has in some places been insisted

are assigned. Add his *Essay*, concerning the abolishing of the ceremonial law annexed to paraphrase on *Titus*. Or *Watt's Harmony of all the Religions prescribed by God*, c. 11.

† *Gal. ii. 2.* See Pref. to *Misc. Sacr.* p. 15, 26, &c. *Benson*, *Hist. Vol. II. sect. 3.* *Doddridge* supposes that the point here concealed, was the exemption, not of the *Gentile Converts* only, but of the *Jews themselves*, from the observance of the *Mosaic* ceremonies, as what they were no longer bound under the *Gospel*, any farther than as the peace and edification of others were concerned in it. See *Vol. v. sect. 3.* noted. and other places there referred to.

‡ *Acts xiii. 14. xvi. 13. Col. ii. 16.*

|| *Rom. xiv. 3. 1 Cor. viii. 13.*

§ *Acts xvi. 3.*

** *F. Spanhemium in Diatrib. de rit. quibusd. Tom II. Op. p. 906.* Sedulo observasse animadverti plura ex *Judaica disciplina* in *Apostolicam Ecclesiam* introducta esse ex Christi vel Apostolorum praxi et observantia, quamquam sine mandato; aut si mandati in modum, non talis tamen, quod, ut ait *Spanhemius*, omnes *Christians* semper et in perpetuum obstringeret; sed quod duntaxat infirmorum, ritibus *Judaicis* penitus immersorum, gratia retentum est. Hae quippe prudentia agebant Apostoli ut in his externis moribus se facile componerent ad infirmitatem conversorum, tum ex *Judaicis*, tum ex *Gentilibus*, prout disertis fatetur verbis *Paulus*. *Bobmer de Extraord. prim. Eccl. Stat. Diff. xii. p. 529.* The same judicious author collects from *Spanhem* xx instances of this; concluding with that famous decree mentioned in the next note. Denique hinc etiam referri possunt que Apostoli ex *Lege Moysis* in gratiam zelotarum ad tempus adhuc observanda constituerunt. *Act. xv. 20.*

* *Acts xv. 28, 29.* See *Benson*, *Hist. of planting Christ. Vol. II. p. 56.* where the best account seems to be given of that decree,

insisted on for several ages, after all the ends and uses of it ceased.

The many miracles, and extraordinary *gifts* of the Spirit, which attended the church at that time, were no less evident signs of its weakness; which stood in need of all these interpositions †; than the frequent appearance of *Angels* had been heretofore: Whereas in its more confirmed and settled state, these *helps* † became unnecessary; the natural and ordinary evidence, the regular and stated methods of instruction, being abundantly sufficient. The same observation might be confirmed from that frequent misapplication of these very *gifts*, so far as to occasion tumults, and confusion in the public assembly, (with reverence I speak it) even in the midst of an effusion of the Spirit §; insomuch that they sometimes *came together not for the better but for the worse**. Even in those days, the *mystery of iniquity* began to work †; many fac-

tions,

cree, from the 17th and 18th of *Levit.* See also *Misc. Sacr. Eff. iv.* and *Doddridge*, Vol. III. p. 234, 240. Comp. *Lardner*, Remarks on *Ward's* *Dissertations*, c. 7. and *Bowyer's* *Apostolical Decree*.

† *Edwards's Survey*, p. 600, 606, &c. add *Hickes's* *Spirit of Enthusiasm exorcised*, p. 27,—30. The particular occasion there was for each, may be seen in *Misc. Sacr. Eff. i.* p. 153, &c.

‡ *Ἄριστης*, 1 *Cor. xii. 28.* parallel to this, and explanatory of it, is *Ἄγιοι* xx. 35. *αὐτοῖς αὐτοὶ τοῦ οὐδενότου.* What these *helps* were, and what necessity there was for them in the church, see *Benson*, ib. c. 1. sect. 6. p. 72. or *Misc. Sacra*, *Eff. i.* p. 58, &c.

§ 1 *Cor. xiv.* See *Div. Leg.* Vol. II. B. iv. sect. 6.

* 1 *Cor. xi. 17.*

† 2 *Theff. ii. 7.* 3 *Ep. Job. ix.* *Jude* xii. V. *Bohmer de extraord. prim. Eccl. Stat. Diff. xii. § 18.*

tions, and schisms arose; many tares were sown, together with the good seed, and often sprang up with it, and choaked it. No sooner had *christianity* got rid of the yoke of the *Jewish* law, than it was corrupted with *Jewish fables* ‡, and traditions. The *Gentile* converts were some time in laying aside their inveterate superstitions ||; and afterwards introduced an impure mixture of their *philosophy* §; this soon produced innumerable sects, and *heresies*; which take up the greatest part of the history of those times **, and gave rise to the multitude of silly spurious books that then abounded and gained credit in the church ††. Instead of attending to the plain, popular sense of scripture, its expounders fly to fanciful allegories †††; raise a number of mysteries; and maintain continual opposition of science, *falsly so called*.

And though the plan of our redemption was delivered,

‡ See *Basnage*, Hist. of the *Jews*, B. iii. c. 22.

|| See *Bingham's Antiq.* B. xvi. c. 5.

§ See *Bibl. Univers.* Tom. x. et *Cleric. Epist. Crit.* iv. 148, &c. cum *Moshem*. *Comm. de turbata per Platonicos ecclesia, in vers.* *Cudworth, Syst. Vid.* id. de rebus Christ. ante *Const. M. Sæc. i. sect. 62.* et *Sæc. ii. sect. 25, 33, 34, &c.*

** See a summary account of it in *Le Clerc, Ep. Crit.* iv.

†† *V. Fabric. Cod. Apocr. N. T. or Jones's New method of settling the Canon.*

†† 'Hunc (scil. *Philonem*) hand ita multo post culpabili affectione sequuti sunt patres et scriptores ecclesiastici, tam suam quam lectorum operam ludentes: sive quod is omnium primus annotata in sacram scripturam tentaret, sive potius quod *Philonem* primo in hunc modum scribentem repererint. Certum sane est cum *christianis* scriptoribus diu plurimum arrisisse; quorum nonnulli eum adeo ad amissim imitari ambiebant, ut sacra volumina, alioquin in se perspicua, fœde obscurarint, obductaque allegoriarum suarum fuligine minus sincera præbuerint.' *Lightfoot, Op. Tom. II. p. 848.* Comp. *Cleric. Hieron. Q. 2. p. 41.*

vered, and its essential parts recorded, during the extraordinary assistance and inspection of the *Holy Ghost*; and in some respects the primitive *christians* seem to have the advantage of others; as being better acquainted with the style in which it was written; and some apostolical traditions, which might give light to it*: yet it by no means follows, that the true genius, import, and extent of this revelation, must be as well understood by the generality of these converts, as it could be by any that came after them. What our Saviour said of *John the Baptist*, that *the least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than he*; greater in his knowledge of the nature, and constitution of that kingdom: the same may be said of common *christians* in that period; many of less merit, and lower abilities, but living in a more enlightened age, might prove equal, if not superior to them, in what may be called

* Which yet is but of very little weight, as may be seen in *Le Clerc*, Ep. Crit. iv. p. 146, &c. Bp. *Taylor*, Lib. of Proph. sect. 5. N. 3. or *Whitby*, Diff. de S. Scrip. Int. passim. ‘Sunt equidem qui sentiunt patres, eo quod N. Testamenti scriptoribus propiores essent, idoneos magis fuisse sensus scripturæ judices, sive interpres; quod tamen falsissimum esse experientia duce compertum est. Ex trium enim primorum seculorum scriptoribus haud pauca in hoc opere interpretamenta congeffimus ab omni veritatis specie aliena. Ostendant nobis patrum patroni unicam scripturæ pericopen, quæ alias obscura cum esset, ab iis sit lucem mutuata. Hoc autem admiranda Dei providentia contigisse existimo, ne ex humano judicio divinarum scripturarum authoritas penderet. Nisi enim experientia, scientiæ magistra, compertum esset patres primævæ et apostolis propiores, haud minus quam cæteri, cæspitasse; primum esset propter insignem eorum pietatem et dona quorundam spiritualia eorum vestigiis institisse.’ *Whitby*, ib. Epil. p. 346. That such *Traditions* were not long preserved by the church. Id. Pref. Disc. p. 40, 41.

called the *theory*, or speculative part, of their religion ; with regard to which only, I would always be understood (1).

The

(1) What has been here said, may perhaps be supposed to contradict an established rule of interpreting scripture, which is laid down by an approved writer in the following words : viz. ‘*That we should have an especial regard to the practice and usage of the first and purest ages of the church, and those that were nearest the times of the apostles.*’ The reason assigned is, ‘*Because the primitive Christians had better advantages of knowing the mind of the Apostles, and the sense of their writings, merely by living so near the Apostolic age, than the greatest industry or learning can furnish us with, that live at this distance.*’ And to suppose that the Christians who lived in those early days, would either carelessly lay aside, or wilfully deviate from the rules and orders which the Apostles gave to the church by the direction of God’s spirit, is a great reflection upon the providence of God and his care of the church ;—and upon the memory of those glorious confessors and witnesses to christianity, who planted the gospel with their preaching, and watered it with their blood, and on whose credit and testimony the authority of the scripture-canonical itself does very much depend. So much reason is there for our paying a due deference to the judgment and practice of the primitive Church in doubts relating to the writings and institutions of the Apostles.’ Lowth’s Directions, p. 63, 64, 65. This is in some measure just ; and when the case is fairly stated, what has been delivered, will not appear so contrary to it as may at first be apprehended. I own, the rule and reason holds in some degree, as well in matters of belief, as practice ; but then I think, it should in the former case be restrained to matters, which those, who had a divine authority, expressly determined to be such ; and of the latter kind, such as they have enjoined as of perpetual necessity, (which may be found perhaps to be much fewer than we usually imagine;) and not extended to every thing which these good men either permitted, or approved, or even complied with themselves ; since such things might be expedient, and even necessary for the then time and state of Christianity ; yet afterwards ceasing to be so, vanish of themselves ; or become liable to be dropt, or done away, in other ages, which would admit, and probably might require very different institutions. Many instances of this have often been alledged by writers on the controverted points both of church-government and discipline ; which need not here be mentioned. Allowing then their full merit to the confessors, saints, martyrs,

The plain fundamental doctrines, and rules of life
were then, no doubt, (as they have generally been)
well

martyrs, &c. and a precedence in certain respects to the most primitive times ;—allowing that they best knew the usages and orders of the Apostles, and most faithfully observed and copied them ; yet these very practices and orders might not be of absolute necessity, (because not registered in their epistles;) and consequently that knowledge be but of little consequence ; nor comparable in other respects to that which we enjoy : nor will it be any reflection on the *providence of God, or his care of the Church,* if these first constitutions should at length be altered, and the grounds of them forgot ; nay, there would rather be more room for making such a reflection, were we obliged to conform now-a-days in all points to the state and usage of the church in those times which so very few have proper means of understanding ; and when they do thoroughly understand them, will see how much the different parts of it have varied from each other in some points ; and of how little weight many others are, wherein they all have for some time agreed. Nor can I apprehend but that each church has still a right to judge of the several occasions, the end, and importance of such points and to determine for itself accordingly, as to its *government and ordinances* ; notwithstanding any *deference due to the judgment and practice of the primitive Church* : wherever we are allowed this liberty by the Apostles and inspired persons, and only left under such general directions as *εὐχημονῶς καὶ κατα ταῦτα*, 1 Cor. xiv. 40. More especially since we are enjoined to use the same freedom of judgment in deciding upon these, as well as in matters of much greater consequence, Phil. i. 10. iv. 8. 1 John iv. 1. See Abernethy's Discourse on Rom. xiv. 5. Tracts, &c. p. 250.

What a different face the church *really primitive* were, from that which she put on in a few generations afterwards ; and how many early alterations were made every where in ecclesiastical matters, merely upon human authority, may be seen at large in Boehmer's Dissertations, and his *Jus Eccl. Prot.* passim : an author well worth the perusing, and who, though he wrote above sixty years ago, yet seems to be known to very few amongst us. One would have hoped this catholic doctrine of *church authority* in fixing the sense of scripture, should have vanished by this time, as it has been so thoroughly exposed in all its shapes by a variety of truly protestant writers, both of our own and other communions, about the beginning of the present century. I shall cite a passage from one of them, who seems to be almost out of date, but

well known; and these the first Christians took good care to act up to; deserving this character, that *they lived*

but well deserves a new edition. ‘ After all, there is no such agreement as is pretended, among fathers or councils, in the interpretation of particular texts. I desire to know, where that general and uninterrupted sense of the christian church about things hard to be understood, is to be found? Are there not various and different interpretations among the fathers and first writers? Did they interpret every text the same way? or were their interpretations always the most reasonable and judicious? or not sometimes very weak and absurd? And how can we depend upon the general sense of the first writers, when that has been so various and diverse, and there is no such thing as a general and uninterrupted sense to be found among them?—I am sorry—should advance such a notion at this time of day, when the wisest men every where are beginning to quit the search of sacred truth from the writings of the fathers, and seeking it in the scriptures themselves. I add, where these are agreed together in the sense of scripture, ‘tis not their authority, but their reason which ought to govern.’ *Occasional Paper* for the years 1716-17-18. Vol. III. No. 4. Let. ii. p. 14, 15. See also an excellant pamphlet entitled *Irenicum Magnum*, printed A. D. 1700.

To what has been said above, give me leave to add the testimony of an eminent writer, whose affection to the church is most unquestionable, and whose authority with many will have the greatest weight. ‘ There is not, it may be, a greater obstruction in the investigation of truth, or the improvement of knowledge, than the too supine resignation of our understanding to antiquity; to what was supposed long since to be done, or what was thought or known to be the opinion of some men who lived so many ages before us: I say, supposed to be done; because we are so totally ignorant of all that was originally done from that time that deserves the name of antiquity, that we know nothing of what was done in ancient times, but by the testimony of those men who lived so many hundred, nay, thousand years after the persons lived, or the things were done, of which they give us the account. So that we were in a very ill condition, if it any way concerned us to know what was said or done in those times, of which we have so dark and obscure, at least very questionable, relation and information given to us. And as we are liable to be misled in the forming our practice or judgment by the rules and measures of antiquity, with reference to the civil and politic actions of our lives; so antiquity will be as blind a guide to us in matters

lived better than they reasoned (K). Though perhaps even thus much can only be affirmed of them in the very

matters of practice or opinion relating to religion; otherwise than as that antiquity is manifest to us in the *Bible*: which as it is the most ancient record we have, of what was said or done in the world from the beginning thereof, so it informs us sufficiently of all that we are obliged to think or do; and whatsoever is too hard for us there to understand, is in no degree necessary for us to know; and yet we may lawfully endeavour to inform ourselves of what is difficult there, though we may be deceived in our inquiry; because there is no *penalty* upon being deceived. The custom is so universal, amongst those who wrestle to support the strength of every opinion in religion, to appeal to the judgment and the practice of the *primitive times*, that standers by are apt to believe that every one of the litigants knows very well where to find the judge to whom he appeals; and yet there was never any difficulty reconciled and determined by that judicatory; nor in truth do the appellants well understand what themselves mean by the appeal they make; nor would have reason to acquiesce in the judgment, if they could receive it by agreeing upon it.' Ld. CLARENDON, of the Reverence due to Antiquity, Essays, p. 218. See more to this purpose from the same author below in note (L).

(K) See *Le Clerc's Eccl. Hist.* of the two first Cent. passim, and *Ep. Crit. et Eccl. Ep. iv. Boehmeri Dissert. Jur. Eccl. ant. Diss. xii. p. 528*, &c. Ld. Clarendon's Essays, p. 218, &c. *Calamy's Defence of Mod. Noncon.* Part i. p. 134, &c. or *Daille, or Barbeyrac, Pref. to Puffendorf*, &c. *Whitby, Diff. in Pref. sect. 4, 5, &c. et Epil. Taylor Liberty of Proph. c. 8. Ibbot B. Lect. Part ii. Serm. iv. or Edwards's Free Disc. on Truth and Error, c. 7. or his Remains*; At the end of *Patrologia* p. 145. is a catalogue of authors that have freely censured the fathers: To which we may add most of the foreign protestant divines, who seem to have no such high notions of their authority, as some among us used to entertain. The learned *Moshem*, speaking of *Hickes's opposition to Cudworth's notion of the Lord's Supper*, says, *Quod autem opponat ei nihil sere habet præter novitatem et dissensionem antiquorum doctorum, quos patres nominant: in quo argumento firmitatem dudum viri sapientes et eruditæ desiderarunt. Infinita enim repudianda nobis forent, quæ fine controversia vera sunt, si ad hanc exigenda essent normam.* *Pref. Cudw. vers. not. Cœn. Dom. Comp. id. Inst. Hist. Christ. Ant. Sæc. ii. Par. ii. c. 3. sect. 10. et Sæc. iv. c. 3. sect. 14. p.*

very primitive times ; ~~now~~* during the extraordinary assistance of the holy Spirit ; and whilst the original evidence, of those great truths, that were the objects of their faith and hope, was clear and strong, whilst its

325. The celebrated *Budde*, in his judgment on *Le Clerc* [de Theolog. Patrist. Isag. L. ii. c. 3. sect. 3. p. 489.] seems to own, that the learning of the generality of the fathers, is to be rated according to the times in which they lived, and that those were much inferior to our own in this respect ; which is all that I am here concerned for. Vid. *Bud.* ib. sect. 10. p. 508. add *Dodwell*, Diss. in *Iren.* Pref. et Diss. i. *Wotton* Reflections, c. 29. p. 389, &c. 2d Ed. *Waterland*, Importance, c. 7. Let the following just apology of the honest writer abovementioned, serve for all that is or may be said upon the present subject. *Nec ut carparamus veteres, aut contemptui exponamus, a nobis hæc dicuntur ; sed ut historicæ legibus pareamus, quæ nihil dissimulari patiuntur, neve nimia auctoritas iis tribuatur ; qua temere admissa, inania multa quasi religionis christiane dogmata proponuntur ; quod iis qui religionem divinitus revelatam amant, pati nefas est.* *Cler. Hist. Eccl.* p. 534.

* Nor will even thus much be allowed by a very able and impartial author, whom I have often been obliged to cite, and whose affection to the cause of christianity appears sufficiently in this, and many other of his works, which I wish more of our countrymen were duly acquainted with, and valued as they well deserve. *Quæ si probe reputentur, nemo mirabitur proxime post apostolorum tempora ea a christianis dicta et facta esse, quæ vix hodie apud doctiores et probiores dici aut fieri possent. Itaque evangelium postea plenius intellectum et altius in animum demissum maiores fructus protulit, et etiamnum profert. Ab ethnica, hoc est, impurissima vita, ad insignem sanctimoniam plerique tam subito transire non poterant ; nec pristinam ignorantiam extemplo, insigni evangelii cognitione, mutare. Passa hoe forte est divina providentia, ne apostolorum discipuli evangelii auctores suisse viderentur, neve sola eorum sanctimonia christiana doctrina commendata videretur ; vel ut semper magnum interesset discrimen inter magistros et discipulos ; quo doctrinæ evangelicæ divinitas magis eluceret ; aut alia de causa quam comminisci nunc non possumus. Interim de re constat, quam cave negaveris, quod rationem sat commodam ejus proferre nequeas, aut quod tibi divinam providentiam decuisse non videatur.* *Cleric. Eccl. Hist.* p. 392, 393. Comp. Id de *Jacobi Ep.* ib. p. 410. Et *Bochmer de prim. Eccl. stat. extraord. Diss. xii.*

its lively influence upon their minds, continued in all its vigour, and they were often obliged to have recourse to its aid for consolation, under the many dangers and distresses, whereto they stood no less frequently exposed : from which extraordinary cases, we are not to form our notions of the state of any institution ; as was observed in the beginning†: Nor are such cases any just objection to the gradual progress of religion here supposed. Neither were the first christians very different from other men, as soon as these extraordinary impressions ceased‡ ; as soon as they were at ease in the world ; and left to the com-

mon

† Part ii. p. 48.

‡ Ως δ' ὁ ἥρος των ἀποστόλων χρόνος δικρόνος εἰληφει τυ βίς τίλος, παρελθεινει τε οὐ γένει των αυτας ἀκοσις τας ἐν θεοι σοφίας, ἐπαγγει λατηξιωμένων, τηνικαντα της ἀδει πλανης την ἀρχην ἐλαμπειν ου συστάσιε, διη της των ἑτεροδιδασκαλων ἀπατης, οι και ἀτι μάδιος ἐτι των ἀποστόλων λειτουργιαν, γυμνη λοιπον ὡδη τη καρδιᾳ, τη της πληθυνας πρεγουμει την φιδιδυμον γυμνην ἀπικρυπτην ἴσπεχειν, Euseb. Hist. Eccl. L. iii. c. 26.—‘ The strict morals or behaviour of the primitive christians ; their sobriety, chastity, humility, &c. shone in their greatest splendour, during the lives of the apostles ; but degenerated so much daily from the period in question, that there was no difference in the fourth century, between the manners and conduct of the christians, and those of other people.’ Bayle, Gen. Dict. Vol. VII. p. 770. N. From the description Julian gives of the licentiousness, the luxury, and lewdness of that town in particular, where Christians first received their name, (vid. *Misopogon* or *Antiochenensis*, passim.) we are not permitted to form any high idea of their purity in those days : and however aggravated such an account may be, as *Am. Marcell.* owns it to have been, (L. xxii.) yet we cannot help supposing, that there were some grounds for so severe a charge against their practice ; though the same Emperor was sensible of the superior excellence and perfection of their moral principles and institutes. vid. infra. p. 193. Comp. *Moyle’s Works*, Vol. II. p. 204, &c. with *Vitringa’s Dissertation* on the State of the Church, from *Nero’s time till Trajan.* Obs. Sac. L. iv. c. 7, 8.

mon course of it, and became involved in all its fashions, forms, and interests: having all along *this treasure in earthen vessels*, that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of them (L).

When

(1) ‘It is with religion, as it is with arts and sciences; the first essays are seldom perfect; they arrive not to their height at first; they require a gradual improvement. And so it is here: the primitive *Christians* were not grown up to that perfection of knowledge and understanding, which was designed by the author of our religion. *Christianity* was in its infancy, at most in its childhood, when these men wrote; and therefore it is no wonder that they *spake as children*, that they *understood as children*, that they *thought as children*: This was according to the economy they were then under. And besides, they had not time and leisure to search into the *christian* doctrines, nor had they laid in a sufficient stock and fund for that purpose; they being but newly adopted into the *christian* church: yet they were willing to appear in its behalf, to defend it as well as they could, which was accepted by Heaven.’ Edwards Patrol. p. 57. ‘Let me not be censured, though I should be so bold as to say, that we should have understood the scriptures much better, if we had not had the writings of the fathers; for they have obscured and depraved them by their different and contrary comments; they have raised controversies, they have taught men to quarrel and dispute about the sense of many texts, which otherwise are obvious; and about several matters of practice, which are evident enough in themselves; some of which are superstitious, &c. ib. p. 135. I could here also take notice, how the writings of the fathers do generally justify those rites, usages, and ceremonies, which were preparatives to popery. For my part, I have been ashamed to see how some men sweat to answer several places in the ancient fathers’ works, which the *papists* alledge in defence of their ceremonies and superstitious observances.’ Id. Free Disc. on Tr. and Err. p. 234.

‘Nor is there any one *christian* church in the world, that at this time doth believe all that the fathers did believe and teach in their time, even in those things in which they did not contradict each other: nor is it the worse for not doing so: nor is there any one church in the *christian* world, that at this day doth enjoin and observe all or the greater part of what was enjoined and practised in the primitive church. And therefore it is very little better than *hypocrisy*, to pretend that submission and resignation

to

When *christianity* is countenanced by the civil power, and thereby gains protection against outward violence

to the ancient fathers, and to the primitive practice ; when they very well know that the learning and industry of pious men who succeeded the fathers, and the great skill in languages which they have arrived to, together with the assistance they have received from them, have discovered much which was not known to them, and made other interpretation of scripture, than was agreeable with their conceptions : and that the difference of times, the alterations of climates, the nature and humour of nations and people, have introduced many things which were not, and altered other things which were, in the practice of the *primitive church*, and observed in the primitive times.—And we have no reason to believe that such introductions or alterations are unacceptable to God Almighty, or that he ever meant to limit posterity when his church should be propagated and spread over the face of the earth, to observe all that was at first practised when all the christians in the world might have been contained in two or three great cities.—And we may piously believe that our Saviour himself and his apostles, who knew well how far the church in time would be extended, would not have reduced the christian faith and doctrine into so little room, and left so little direction for the government thereof, if they had either expected such a union of opinion and judgment in all propositions which might arise, or be drawn from the former, as some men fancy to be necessary ; or if they had not intended or foreseen, that in the latter, very many things would depend upon the wisdom and discretion of christian princes ; who, according to the customs and manners of the nations where christianity should be planted, would establish and alter many things, as they saw from time to time like to advance, and contribute to the growth and practice thereof.'

' But what then ? shall *antiquity* be despised by us, and the great learning and piety of the first lights, the reverend fathers of the church, be undervalued, and their judgment looked upon without reverence ? God forbid. We resort to antiquity as the best evidence of what was then done, and think we have the same liberty in the perusal of the monuments thereof, those conduits which convey to us the information of what was then done, as in other history ; which, it may be, hath been transmitted with more care and exactness ; to consider the improbability of this matter of fact, and so doubt the veracity of it ; the prudence and fitness of another, and think it might have been better done. And so we look upon the fathers, and what they said, and what they

violence from its ancient enemies, it loses much of its internal purity, and suffers many ways by the connection with its new friends: as soon as it becomes established in the *Roman Empire*, it partakes of the imperial pomp and pageantry; and admits the pagan ceremony.

they did, with full reverence, though not with full resignation; we admire their learning and their piety, and wonder how they arrived at either, in times of so much barbarity and ignorance, in those places where they lived: and thank God for enlightening them to give testimony for him in those ages of darkness and infidelity, and for the instruction and information that we have received from them; and our reverence is the greater to them, for having seen so much in so great darkness; and yet we cannot but think that darkness hindered them from seeing all. And when we consider the faction and distemper of the times they lived in, we may, without lessening the estimation we have for them, believe that distemper and faction might have some influence upon them, and mislead them in some particulars: And when they so often contradict one another in many things, and many of them themselves in some, it cannot be reasonable to oblige us to submit in all things to which they all consent, if our reason makes it manifest to us, that they are in the wrong; though I do not know that we do dissent from them in any such particular, yet we see all that they did, and we may modestly believe, that they did not see all that we do.—In a word, many men do believe, that religion and truth have suffered much more prejudice by the too supine submission and resignation to antiquity, and the too much modesty and bashfulness that restrained men from contradicting the ancients, than they have, or are like to do, by our swerving from those rules and dictates which they have prescribed to us; and we shall have well complied with the advice of the prophet, *Jer. vi. 16.* when we have stood upon the old ways, and seen the old paths, informed ourselves of what they said, and what they did; though we do not lie down to them and acquiesce in all that pleased them. He who will profess all the opinions which were held by the most antient fathers, and observe all that was practised in the primitive times, cannot be of the communion of any one church in the world; as he who would follow the politic maxims of antiquity, and the rules heretofore observed among other nations, and it may be in his own; will be found a very inconvenient counsellor in the present affairs of any court in Europe.' Ld. Clarendon, of the reverence due to antiquity, *Ess.* p. 223, 4, 5, 6. fol.

ceremonies*. We find it split into new schisms, and heresies; torn with ambitious contests, and perpetual struggles for wealth and power†: perplexing doubts
and

* See Middleton's Letter from *Rome*, 4th Ed. 'Tum maxime vitiari cœpit, cum minime debuerat; Imperio ad fidem adducto, sed et imperii pompa ecclesiam inficiente: ethnicis ad Christum conversis, sed et Christi religione ad ethnicæ formam depravata,' &c. *Turrettin.* de variis Chr. Rel. fatis. Orat. Acad. Genov. 1708, p. 15. Comp. *Newt.* on Dan. c. xiv. and *Boehmer,* *Jus Eccl. Protestant.* sect. 12. p. 8, 9. et § xvii, &c. Ed. v. 1756. Veræ pictatis in locum ingens variarum superstitionum agmen sensim suspectum est, quæ partim ex receptis temere sententiis, partim ex præpostero profanos ritus imitandi studio, partim ex insita omnium hominum mentibus ad vanam quandam religionis ostentationem propensione, profectæ sunt. Crebræ primum in Palæstinam, et ad eorum sepulchra, qui pro veritate occubuerant, profectiones institutæ sunt, quasi hinc sanctitatis semen, salutisque certa spes domum referri possit. Ex Palæstina deinde, locisque sanctitatis opinione verendis, pulveria seu terra portiones, tanquam efficacissima contra vim malorum remedia, ablatae, et caro ubique pretio venditæ, et redemptæ sunt. Supplicationes porro publicæ, quibus Deos olim populi placare volebant, ab his sumptæ, magnaque multis in locis pompa celebratæ sunt. Templis, aquæ certis formulis consecratæ, imaginibus sanctorum hominum, eadem virtus ascripta, eademque jura tributa, quæ Deorum templis, statuis et lustrationibus antequam Christus venisset, adscripta fuerant. Ex his speciminibus conjecturam facile sagaciores facient, quantum pax et tranquillitas, per *Constantinum* parta, rebus Christianis nocuerit. *J. L. Boehm.* Iust. Hist. Christ. Ant. Sæc. 4. Par. ii. c. 3. sect. 2. p. 312.

† Vid. *Ammian. Mar.* L. xv. et xxvii. *Socr. Eccl. H. L.* i. c. 22, 23. *Boehmeri* Dissert. Jur. Eccl. passim. Sub cruce ut plurimum integra erat Ecclesiæ salus; postquam vero, maxime *Constantini* tempore, potentia et divitiis crescere cœpit, a vero mox descivit scopo; et ex clericorum fastu et avaritia, singuli, non quæ Christi, sed quæ sua, querere inceperunt; et inde Ecclesia ambitionis atque avaritiae palæstra facta esse videtur. Quid itaque mirum, quod suprema lex Ecclesiastica quoque huc unice directa fuerit, ut avaritiae clericali satisficeret; thesauri Ecclesiastici, sub specie boni operis, augerentur; et dominatus sacer, seu hierarchia, magis magisque, ab initio quidem occulte, sed mox manifeste, stabiliretur; et tandem in monstrum illud *Monarchia Romana* excreverit? Id. *Jus Eccl. Protestant.* p. 13. *Hala* 1720.

and difficulties raised in points of doctrine; subtle distinctions, and refinements made in its precepts; and both often confounded in many an idle controversy (m): till at length almost the whole church of

Christ

(m) *Sicut olim arbori vite prælata arbor scientiæ maxima dederat mala, ita tunc quoque curiosam eruditionem pietati ante-habitam, et ex religione artem factam: cui deinde consequens fuerit, ut ad exemplum eorum qui turrim Babyloniam ædificabant, affectatio temeraria rerum sublimium dissonas locutiones et discordiam pareret.* Grot. V. R. C. L. ii. c. 1. p. 277. *Ut in illis temporibus,* says Erasmus very justly, *ingeniosa res fuit esse Christianum.* Comp. Basil. ap. Damasc. Hilar. ad Conf. Euseb. de Vit. Conf. L. ii. c. 61. Ammian. M. L. xxi. fin. Barbevrac, Pref. to Puf. sect. 19. Taylor, Lib. Proph. sect. 2. No. 26. Turrettin, ib. p. 16, 20. Mably, Obs. on the Romans, B. iii. p. 235. ‘At first the teachers of Christianity discoursed it with more simplicity, after the manner of Christ and his apostles, as may be seen in Clemens Romanus: but afterward, as learning came into the Church, they turned the form of Christianity from that of a law, into that of an art. They early separated all the matters of truth from the matters of duty; which the holy scriptures never do. This separation was more useful to speculation and dispute, than to life and practice: but so it went on, till there was no one of the liberal arts more artificial and subtle than the art of religion. Then the systems of Christianity came into esteem, and were multiplied; and every point of doctrine was disputed, opposed, and defended with the greatest niceness that could be. Few were able to distinguish what was human in matter and form, from what was divine; and fewer dared to own it. But, by this means, none but those who had learning and sagacity, could comprehend the doctrine of Christianity: And the people found it so difficult to understand, what the learned had made almost unintelligible to themselves, that they despaired of knowledge, and acquiesced in ignorance.’ Jeffrey on Phil. i. 10. Tracts, Vol. II. p. 337. The several schemes of Christianity in different ages are set down in the same place, and so very well described, that any common Christian by perusing them may easily see what system he is of.

To give the reader a general idea of his method, I shall here add his principal divisions, as well as the substance of what is delivered under them, from p. 338, and 366. containing, 1. The simplicity of the truth of Christianity, in the ages next after the

apostles

Christ seems to be overwhelmed with *Popery* and *Mahometanism*; for which indeed it was too fully ripe (N): Though perhaps the latter of these two (notwithstanding

apostles to St. *Augustine*, i. e. till after A. D. 404. 2. The rudiments of the art of Christianity in the ages following them, from St. *Augustine* to P. *Lombard*, i. e. between A. D. 404, and 1141. 3. The subtlety and corruption of Christianity, from P. *Lombard*, to *Luther*; joined with the grossness of idolatry and superstition in practice: i. e. from A. D. 1141, to 1517. 4. The reformation of the state of Christianity among some Protestants, from *Luther*: rejecting the corruptions, retaining the art; since A. D. 1517. 5. The restoration of the simplicity of Christianity; not only rejecting the corruptions, but also the art; considering Christianity as a law, or act of grace.—In the first period of time, Christianity was virtue and piety; without any mixture of learning. In the second, it was nature and grace with a tincture of learning. In the third, it was church and sacraments, with the extreme subtlety, and abundance of superstition. In the fourth, it was Christ and faith; being a refinement upon the doctrine of the second period. In the next period of time, we hope it will be piety and virtue, as in the first; with an improvement from the best Greek and Roman moralists, corrected and perfected by the gospel of Christ.

(N) See *Sale Prelim. Disc.* to the *Koran*, sect. 2. Add *Grot. de Ver. R. C. L.* vi. c. 1. not. ‘In the mean time (as Mr. *Rotheram* observes, Serm. on the Wisdom of Prov.) the remains of learning were saved in the East from amidst the general wreck, by the removal of the seat of Empire from *Rome* to *Constantinople*; which otherwise must have perished entirely, when the Northern nations over-ran the Western Empire.—So far was this step from causing the downfall of the Empire, that it was a means of saving a part of it: which answered two great purposes, and doubly served religion. The eastern or Greek church was saved from the spiritual usurpation of the Romish; and learning was preserved from the fury of Gothic barbarism, to be an instrument in due time of retrieving Europe from the tyranny of superstition.’ As in effect it did upon the downfall of that Empire, and the seizing this its metropolis by the *Turks*; [A. D. 1453.] which obliged the Christians of the Greek church to betake themselves for refuge into *Italy* and the adjacent parts, whereby the study and knowledge of the Greek language was there much propagated. *Worthington*, c. 8. Comp. *Gerdes Hist. Evang.* sect.

withstanding the mixture of imposture in it) may have proved a seasonable corrective of the former; by its rapid progres giving some check to that anti-christian tyranny, which was then growing predominant; and by its more tolerant spirit preserving the remains of those particular churches, which would have otherwise been wholly exterminated; and thence may appear to have been in the main, a considerable reformation (o), how grievous soever its oppressions often proved since that time.

But

sect. xvi, p. 10. Other benefits arising from this Revolution may be seen in the *Complete Collection of Voyages, &c.* B, i, c, 2, sect. 16, p. 515. A character of these emigrants, with some account of their works, may be seen in *Foster's Essay on Accents*, p. 209, 215, &c. 2d Ed. That such as these, or their contemporaries, or any set of learned men in the foregoing century, were able to forge all the classic authors except half a dozen, can hardly be supposed by any one but a *Jesuit*. See an extraordinary performance of father *Harduin*, entitled, ad *Censuram Script. Vet. Prolegom.* Ed. Lond. 1766.

(o) See *Reflections on Mohammedism, &c.* printed 1735, wherein the author attempts to shew that *Mohammedism* may have been ordained for the good of Christianity, to withstand the corruptions of it in times past: and to increase and enlarge it in times to come, p. 5, &c. "The *Turks* in general honour *Christ* and *Christianity*—have a great opinion of the sanctity of our religion—and in many places respect the Christian clergy who live among them, notwithstanding their hatred of the Laity in some countries: one sect of them particularly, believes that *Christ* is God, and the Redeemer of the world; and that he shall judge it at the last day. These are distinguished by the name of the good followers of the *Messiah*." *Worthington*, B. Lect. V. 2, p. 246. Comp. *Young on Idol.* v. 2, p. 185, &c. All authors agree, that what gave *Mahomet* the greatest room to advance his new religion, (beside the weakness of the *Roman* and the *Persian* monarchies, see *Mod. Univ. Hist.* Vol. I, p. 18, fol.) was the distracted, ignorant, corrupt state of the eastern church at that time; the miserable contentions, and most horrid persecutions, on every religious pretence; the dissoluteness of all sects and parties; and 'tis evident that this impostor contributed

But this is a subject too disagreeable to dwell upon ; nor am I inclined to aggravate the faults and imperfections of past ages*. All that I would observe, is what appears from the most transient view of ecclesiastical history, namely, that the rise, and progress
of

buted not only to reform the morals of a great part of the eastern world, but likewise reduced them from polytheism and gross idolatry, to the belief and worship of one God ; which was the principal doctrine he set out with at first, and gained great reputation by ; and which he made the ground of his pretended mission. His system must have the same effect still wherever it prevails, as it does very largely in several heathen countries, being so much superior to any other species of religion settled in such countries ; it contains a great deal of pure Christianity ; it enforces the virtues of charity, temperance, justice, and fidelity, in the strongest manner ; it prohibits extortion ; and all kinds of cruelty, even to brutes ; and binds its votaries to the strictest order, regularity, and devotion. (V. Bayle Art. *Mahomet*, not. L. Hottinger Hist. Or. p. 315, &c.) Several sects of them believe in Christ, (vid. *D. Millius de Rel. Mabam.* Diff. x, p. 344, &c. *Reland de R. M.* p. 25, &c. and Sir P. Ricaut's Hist. B. ii, c. 11, &c. or *Millar*, p. 230.) and entertain as worthy notions of him to the full, as some of the Papists do at present. (See *l'Alcoran des Cordeliers*; and *Bayle*. Gen. Dict. Vol. vii, p. 326, B.) One may see to what height the Romish corruptions were grown in Mahomet's time, by his reproaching the Christians with their associating to God their doctors and monks (*Koran ix*, 31,) and by his surprising mistake of the Virgin *Mary*, for the third person in the *Trinity* : which yet is not much worse than the account given of her by *Cyril*. (See *Reland's Four treatises on Mab.* p. 174, &c. or *Sale's Prelim. Disc.* p. 35, and his *Koran*, c. v, p. 98.) How this mistake of Mahomet's came about may be seen in *D. Millii Diff. de Mohammedismo ante Mabam.* p. 346, 347. And what havock those most lamentable controversies on this subject made in his time appears from the confession of a learned writer ; who tells us, that it obliged him to drop his design of giving us the history of these churches. Pref. to *Prid. Life of Mahomet*. See also *Jortin's Remarks on Eccl. Hist.* Vol. III. p. 42, &c. V. p. 453, &c. his 1st charge, and *Taylor's Essay on the Divine Oeconomy*, p. 52, 54, 65, &c.

* These have been fully set forth, in *Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical History*.

of *Christianity* has, in the main, been similar to that of all other dispensations ;—that both the name of *Christ*, and the nature of his religion, were discovered ; or both the *external* and *internal* propagation of *Christianity*, was carried on in the same gradual manner.

As to the first, The *Jews*, who had before been made use of to spread the knowledge of the true God, and his providence, and prepare men for a more noble institution, by their frequent dispersions over the east ; are here much more so, (when they were better qualified for it, and less liable to be corrupted by the heathen, among whom some of them were so long to converse) [P] by their dispersion over the whole world, at the destruction of their temple, and government, by *Titus*, and under the following emperors ; especially *Hadrian* (Q) ; and thereby

[P] See *Le Clerc*, Causes of Incred. p. 264, &c. In fact, none of them that we know of, however bad they were, and are in other respects, have fallen from their own God, to the idolatrous worship of their neighbours any where, during this their long and miserable dispersion ; a tenth part of which suffering would have been the utter ruin of any other people, and totally destroyed the very name of these in any former times. This must be thought remarkable by every one who thinks at all about it. Nor has their case been less extraordinary in Christian countries, where they have never been permitted to rest long in any kingdom ; where frequently, in every age, the public eye is turned upon them by some new persecution ; and yet, notwithstanding all this, they are believed to be more numerous on the whole at present, than they have ever been in their most flourishing estate, in their own land. The authors of *Mod. Univ. Hist.* allow them to be upwards of three millions. B. xx. c. i. p. 620. fol.

(Q) He sold them at fairs for the same price as horses, [Hier. in *Jer.* p. 342. M. Glycas says, the stated price was four *Jews* for

thereby every where publish, and prove the truth of their own, as well as the gospel prophecies (R); and
become

for one bushel of barley. [Annal. ap. *Worthington*, B. L. f. 13. ubi plura.] and would not suffer any of them so much as to set foot in, or come in view of *Jerusalem*, say some [Aug. Civ. Lib. xv. c. 21. *Sulp. Sev. Hist. S. L. ii. c. 31. Hil. in Ps. xlviij.]] or of any part of *Judea*, according to others. [Hier. in *Dan.* 595. *Tert. Apol. c. 21.*] Nor could they obtain even this privilege from any of the succeeding emperors (except *Julian*) but with great difficulty, and only for one day in a year, to see and bewail its ruins; and that upon paying a considerable sum; [Hier. in *Zeph. c. 2. Univ. Hist. B. iii. p. 40. Euseb. E. H. 21. 6. Comp. *Bastnage*, *Hist. J. B. vi. c. 9. sect. 28, 29. et Witsi Exercit. Acad. 12. 16.*] a rigour, as has been observed, that was never used towards any other people conquered by the *Romans*. ‘Thus all the attempts of that perfidious nation towards the recovery of their former condition, served only to aggravate those calamities, with which they had been so often threatened by their prophets; and to reduce them to the deplorable state, in which we now behold them; being a crew of contemptible vagabonds, dispersed all over the world, without king, temple, or pontiff; driven from their own country, and not daring to set foot in it, even as passengers and strangers. The edict of *Adrian* excluding all *Jews* from *Jerusalem*, extended to such of them as had embraced the *Christian* religion; so that they too being obliged to quit the city, the church was by that means delivered from the servitude of the law; for till that time, not only the bishops of *Jerusalem* had been chosen from among the circumcised *Christians*, but all the converted *Jews* joined to the observance of the gospel that of the law.’ *Univ. Hist. ib. p. 41. Sulp. Sev. ib. et Mojssem. de Reb. Christ. Sæc. 2. sect. 38.****

(R) *Deut. xxviii. Matt. xxviii. 35, 38, &c. Luke xxi. 24. Deut. xxxii. 21. Rom. x. 19. Jer. xv. 4. xxv. 9. Hos. iii. 4. Isai. vi. 9, &c. xlviij. 22, &c. Bossuet [Univ. Hist. p. 304.] observes a singular instance of divine providence, in preserving this people so much longer, than any of those who formerly conquered and enslaved them, v. g. the *Affyrians*, *Medes*, *Greeks*, and *Romans*; and still continuing them distinct and separate from all the other nations among whom they live: with other reasons of this extraordinary dispensation he assigns the following, viz. That hereby we may find in unsuspected hands those very Scriptures, which foretel both the blindness and unhappiness of these same *Jews*, who notwithstanding keep them so religiously.*

He

bc/ come the strongest evidences, because unwilling ones, in favour of the *Christian* religion.

And

sf/ He makes the like observation on the *Samaritans*, a sect so weak, that it seems to be upheld on purpose for a check upon the others; and to confirm their evidence, by bearing an independent testimony to the antiquity of *Moses*, and the authenticity of his writings. ib. p. 406.

In what a remarkable manner every curse described by *Moses* has been to the full inflicted on that miserable people, may be seen in *Patrick* upon *Deut.* xxviii. Comp. Mod. Pt. of *Univ. Hist.* B. xx. c. 1.

Nor less completely were all *Christ's* predictions fulfil'd, with regard to the judgements inflicted, on the same people at the dissolution of their Government, as may appear from the history of those times, set forth by a learned writer. See observations on our Lord's character and conduct, by *Bp. Newcome*, pt. 1. c. 3. l. 1. *Slay them not*, says the *Psalmist*, *lest my people forget it*, but scatter them abroad, [Ps. lxx. 11.] which words are so opposite, to their condition, that some authors have imagin'd, that psalm to contain a prophetic description of it, as is intimated from *St. Austin*, by *Dr. Bandinel*, Serm. 2. p. 71.

Hallet [Disc. Vol. I. p. 3, &c.] supposes, that in *Ps.* li. 14. *the blood-guiltiness* there confessed relates, not to that of *David* himself, which accompanied his other sin of adultery, (as is intimated in the title, purporting that occasion of it, though no mention be made of the latter in the whole *Psalm*;) but to the murder of *Messiah*, which the body of the *Jews* are to acknowledge in those words. This he confirms from ver. 16.—19. which could not possibly be true of *David's* days, but must be written prophetically, for the general use of the *Jews* since the destruction of *Jerusalem*. This he observes of some other *Psalms*, particularly *Ps.* lxxiv. 3, 9, &c. The like is observed of *Ps.* xxii, lxix, lxxxviii; in which the several passages which expressly describe the crucifixion of our Lord, are pointed out by *Vitrunga*, Obs. T. I. L. ii. c. 3. p. 380. And the like observation is made on *Ps.* xci. by *Peters* [Crit. Diff. on *Job*, p. 300, &c.] which he thinks was composed for the use of the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, upon erecting the *brazen serpent*: and which perhaps they might have been taught to repeat at the same time they were looking up to that great standing type or emblem of him, who was to bruise the serpent's head, ver. 13. and comp. *John* iii. 14. xii. 32, 33.

If this appear to be the case in so many of the *Psalms*, how strongly does it justify our Lord's appeal to them as treating of him!

And as the *Roman* empire, by its increase and settlement at the time of *Christ's* coming, contributed remarkably to this same end, so did it no less afterwards by its decline and dissolution ; at which time *Christianity* [as well as general literature] was spread abroad with its remains, among the *Northern* nations, and carried to the remotest isles ; in the same manner as the *Greek* philosophy had been dispersed over all *Asia*, upon the dissolution of *Alexander's* empire *.

By these and the like means, was the gospel divulged every where ; and the sound of it might be said, to have gone into all the earth, and its words unto the ends of the world § : and where it has prevailed, it
prevailed

him ! *Luke xxiv. 44.* And what a noble argument may arise hence, for the conviction and conversion of that extraordinary people to whom they were originally communicated, when once the veil, which is on their hearts, shall be taken away ; as by the same spirit of prophecy we are assured it shall ! Vid. *Fenwick* on the Titles of the Ps. p. 116, &c. Add *Jortin* on Ps. cx. Rem. on Eccl. Hist. Vol. III. p. 305. Add to all this, that the ten tribes, who had no hand in the rejection of the *Messiah*, may probably beat length recall'd from their dispersion and remitted with the rest of their brethren, in a joint conversion to Christianity ; as several texts referr'd to below, [Note T.] seem to imply.

* Vid. *Rollin*, A. Hist. Vol. VII. Introd. p. 6. ‘ The seeds of Christianity, which had been spread over the whole body of the Roman Empire, were preserved in all those fragments into which it was now broken, and even conveyed by many of its barbarous conquerors beyond its utmost limits.’ *Rotheram* on the Wisdom of Prov. p. 40. To which we may add, that the spirit of *Liberty*, so requisite to the due growth of this good seed, and to which the *Roman* Empire had not been very favourable, was at the same time diffused over its remains ; those nations which overturned it, however barbarous in other respects, being favourers of free or limited governments. See *Spirit of Laws*, B. XVII. c. 5.

§ *Rom. x. 18.* See the authors below.

prevailed more entirely than any other religion did ; which makes a great abatement in the disproportion that heathenism in general may seem to have, in its numbers, above Christianity†. And though some nations, seem at first view, to have quite lost it again ; yet, upon a more strict survey, we may discover a great deal of it disguised in their several systems ; which we have reason to think, will, at length, be found of them in greater purity and perfection ; and like good seed sown, revive in its proper season. Nor is it now in so narrow a compass as is generally imagined*. Though there be many large countries where it is not publickly established, or formally professed ; yet there are some traces, both of this and former revelations, in most parts of the world ; as appears from several modern writers† : Its effect, even among some rude and unpolish'd people, has been very considerable, and will we trust, appear to be still more so, when they become fully ripe for it ; which may perhaps prove the case with them, much sooner than we are apt to imagine. And as some corruptions, both in the natural and civil body, generally make way for a more complete soundness, and then are themselves cured : so it may appear to be in the body spiritual. Thus the thick cloud of Popery,

[†] Jenkin, Vol. I. p. 347.

[‡] Vid. Fabric. *Lux Evang.* c. 36, &c. or Millar Hist. Prop. c. 7, 8, &c.

[†] See many of them cited, and more referred to, by Jenkin, Fabricius and Millar. Add Young's Hist. Diss. Vol. II. p. 218, &c. with that remarkable testimony of *Cosmos Indicopleustes* in Sharpe's Serm. on the want of Universality, p. 55, &c.

Popery, that has been so long hanging over the western church, was in part dissipated at the *Reformation*; (which during the fire of persecution raised up some shining examples of true primitive piety, refining many parts of the Christian world from all the dross they had contracted*; and which helped greatly to amend the discipline of that very church, who refused to admit any material alteration in her doctrines†;) this gloomy system, by its approximation to the worship of *heathens*, may serve still to lead them more insensibly out of their grosser ignorance; and be no improper introduction to a more perfect state of religion among them; and when it has answer'd the remainder of that end, its own idolatries may be abolished||; and the judgments inflicted on

them,

* See Worthington's *Essay*, p. 152, &c. *Turretin de Christ. Doctr. Fatis*, p. 29. *Mosheim. Inst. Hist. Eccl. Sec. xvi. sect. 11.*

† *Hakewill Apol.* p. 547. *Collier. Eccl. H. Vol. II.* p. 138, 139. How much the Reformation contributed to improve that church, both in science and morals, may be seen in *Robertson. Hist. Ch. V. B. xii.* p. 449, &c.

|| Worthington has fixed the term of antichrist, foretold by Daniel, xii. 7. at 1260 years, according to the usual computation; viz. a time, 360; times, or twice a time, 720; and half a time, 180: dating its commencement A. D. 618. and consequently its expiration A. D. 1878. p. 208. He adds, "St. Paul assures us that that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first. The falling away, we see, is come. This impediment is removed in these our days. There is no want of a defection from the faith, to retard his coming. Were our Lord now at the door, as he cannot be far off, there is but too much ground for that question, When the Son of man cometh [i. e. according to W's interpretation, for the destruction of antichrist] shall be find faith on earth? B. Lect. v. 2. Disc. xvii. p. 214. Comp. Dr. Parry's Tract on the same subject. p. 140, &c.

them, so far tend to alarm, and convince the *Jews*, (whose blindness it has hitherto confirmed†;) that it may become upon the whole productive of a clearer light than ever, and prepare the way for a purer, as well as more enlarged state of *Christianity*, among both *Jews* and *Gentiles* (s).

But not to dwell on conjectures; this we know assuredly, that every people, nation, and language shall at length know and embrace the true religion;

† See Brett's Narrative of the *Jewish Council*; *Phoenix*, Vol. I. p. 543. compared with *Menasseh Ben Israel's Defence*, ib. Vol. II. p. 401.

(s) *Edwards Survey*, p. 715. *Scott Christian Life*, Part ii. Vol. II. c. 7. p. 489. Some great end will most undoubtedly be served by the permission of *Popery* so long, after the mystery of its ini-
quity is seen through even by the generality of its own professors; and which can therefore be upheld merely on political views; as seems to be in a great measure the case with it at present, When its dominion throughout *Europe* is no less visibly declining, and a religious toleration is advanc'd, amongst the most bigotted pro-
fessors of it, even in the house of *Austria* itself. During its very darkest ages, which afford the strongest objection to that progress in religion which we suppose, *Christianity* was still spreading wider and wider, in the more distant parts of the world; and where *popish* converts now become the seed of Christians, and may not improperly be compared to the proselytes of the gate among the *Jews*; being probably the first fruits of the Harvest God intends to have among the heathens of those parts; and after they are fully converted, may be most serviceable to promote the conversion of others. [See *Jurieu*, Pref. to *Accompl. Proph.* or *Mil- lar*, Vol. II. p. 230, 364.] We may affirm that *popery* there, is still better than *paganism*; and by its so great resemblance of the pagan superstitions, (particularly in the point of images) it more easily insinuates itself among such people; and its permission therefore, may be considered in some respects, as no very unfit introduction to a more perfect state of religion there in future ages; whenever they shall become capable of it. See *Colliber's Impar. Inqu.* p. 138. 2d Edit. with *Gage's Survey of the West Indies*.

and all kingdoms of the world become the kingdom of Christ (r).

Secondly. As to what may be called, more particularly, the *internal propagation* of Christianity, or the comprehension of the whole gospel scheme ; the same method is carried on, though not in so visible a manner, or capable of being distinguished by such remarkable periods. That perfect *analogy* between religion and the common course of nature, which has been so well displayed by a late writer*, holds no less true, I believe, in this respect ; and that as all arts and sciences, with every improvement in natural and civil life, are still drawing nearer to perfection ; as we become daily better acquainted with the system of the world ;—with the nature of the heavens, and earth ;—with that of our own body, and mind ;—in short, as every branch of knowledge has been all along enlarging, and improving itself ; and every successive age, not only enjoys the discoveries of the

foregoing,

(r) *Psl.* ii. 8. *xxii.* 27. *lxiii.* 11. *lxxxvi.* 9. *I/2.* ii, 2, ix, 7, xi, 9—11, xl, 5, *xlix.* 6, *lxi.* 10. *lv.* 5. *lvi.* 7. *lx.* 9—11. *lxvi.* 18, 22. *Ezek.* *xxxvii.* 21, &c. *xxxix.* 23, 29. *Dan.* ii. 44. *vii.* 14. 27. *Hos.* i. 10, iii, 5. *Joel* iii, 1, &c. *Am.* ix, 14. *Mich.* v, 4. *Zeph.* iii, 9. *Zech.* ix, 10, xii, 10, xiv, 9. *Mal.* i, 11. *Matt.* xxiv. 14. *Mark* xiii. 10. *Luke* iii, 6, xxi, 24. *Acts* xiii, 47. *Rom.* viii, 19. &c. xi, 25, xiv, 11, &c. *1 Cor.* xv, 25. *2 Cor.* iii, 16, &c. *Rev.* xi, 15, xiv, 6.

From such texts as these does *Worthington* infer that the kingdom of Christ will be an *universal theocracy*, whereof that under the *Jews* was in some respects typical ; *Eph.* 292, &c.—where there shall be *universal holiness*, 392, and *obedience* to the gospel precepts in their strictest sense ; 309, and either an *universal language*, or a *perfect union* in faith and worship, 308.

* *Bp. Butler.*

foregoing, but adds still more valuable ones of its own* ; so it is probable, that the knowledge of religion alone is not wholly at a stand ; but on the contrary, that as we continually advance in the study of God's works, we shall come to a proportionably better understanding of his word : as by all these means human reason is still growing more perfect ; so by the same means, divine revelation will gradually clear up ; and Christianity itself draw nearer to its fulness.

What is here supposed, has been remarkably confirmed in fact since the *Reformation* ; about which time those extraordinary discoveries of printing†, and the use of the compass, with some others, in Europe, jointly contributed to the dispersion of learning, and enlargement of commerce over the world ; and at the same time, gave a new publication of Christianity ; and in much greater purity, than it had been in before, for many centuries. Ever since which time, all these improvements have been continually gaining ground. New light has been given to the prophetic, and other more abstruse parts of scripture, in every successive

* See Part iii.

† The great effect this had in carrying on the *Reformation* may be seen in *Gerd's Hist. Evang.* Sec. xvi, p. 5, &c. The want of it is strongly set forth by Dr. Robertson, *Hist. Ch.* V, n, n.

• The invention of the art of making paper and of printing are two considerable events in literary history. It is remarkable that the former preceded the first dawning of letters, and improvement in knowledge towards the close of the 11th century, the latter ushered in the light which spread over Europe at the era of the Reformation, ib, p, 236. Comp, id, V, III, p, 449, &c. To which we may add, *Pointing*, which was brought to perfection shortly afterwards. *Essay on the use of Stops*, Ann. Regr. for 1759, p, 413.

successive age, and almost by every writer; as a very able judge assures us†. The grounds of our religion are in general much better understood, more rationally explained, and properly vindicated; and from what appears at present, we have reason to think, they will be still more and more so‡. We

may

† *Newton on Dan. c. 1.*

‡ ‘At tandem, superiore præsertim seculo et hoc nostro, cum disciplinæ omnes et quæ pertinent ad antiquitatis linguarumque demortuarum intelligentiam, et quæ rerum ipsarum cognitionem tradunt, et quæ veri in quavis arte inveniendi ac exponendi rationem docent, ad multo majorem perfectionem adducere essent; antiquissima illa religionis divinitus revelata monumenta multo melius explicari, certioraque ex iis consecaria duci, capitaque omnia Theologica rectius tradi cœperunt, quam unquam antea ab apostolorum ætate factum fuerat. Quod multo citius contigisset, si majores nostri judicio suo maluerent uti quam alieno; neque enim ingenia defuisse puto posterioribus seculis, sed artem distinxat, qua nimia cœaque admiratione priorum oppressa jacebat. Quare contigit idem Theologia Christianæ, quod philosophiz; quæ tum demum cum fructu, ut par erat, excoli et perfici cœpit, cum homines cœperè recordari, sibi rationem non minus esse datum quam Aristotelis; excussaque admiratione antiquitatis, dogmata ejus ad examen revocare. Ut igitur qui nunc pulcherrima recentiorum in philosophia inventa oblivioni mandari vellent, ut Aristoteles decreta sola iterum obtinerent, tenebras luci preferre merito censerentur: ita qui nunc nos revocant ad elementa ac prima veluti tentamina patrum Græcorum aut Latinorum, plurique ea fieri volunt quam quæ nunc scimus; ii virum adultæ ætatis pertinaci studio longaque experientia edoctum, ad pueritiae ruditudinem redire volunt; majorique in pretio habere quæ puer animo agitabat, quam quæ adultus maturo judicio penitavit. Inimici sunt profectus omnini; in sacris literis, adeoque ipsius veritatis. Talenta divinitus nobis data, et nuper mirum in modum aucta, minuere atque infodere omni ope conantur. Quod ab iis perfici nec Deus, nec homines sinent, donec in aliquo terrarum angulo literæ et veritatis amor vigebuit.’ Cleric. Ep. Crit. iv, p. 151, &c. Comp. id. Q. Hieron. 3, p. 45, &c. Id. Dissert. ii, sect. 13. Proleg. ad Comment. p. 28, with Ibbot B. Lect. Part ii, Semn. iv, p. 119. and Lactant. de Orig. Err. L, ii, sect. 7. To which may be added Wotton’s Two excellent chapters on the Philol. and Theol. learning

may venture to affirm, that in our own nation, there never were more free and worthy notions of the deity, and his providence; nor were the various dispensations of religion ever generally so well understood as they are at present. Never was real knowledge so fully and equally dispersed among all parties, and professions of men. Nor is there any sect, however wild and extravagant it may have been at its first setting out, but evidently partakes of these improvements.

And though, while the minds of men are warm and eager in the quest of truth; and daily teeming with new inventions; many monsters will spring up and strange errors and absurdities be advanced, in such full freedom of enquiry, and debate; though this increase of knowledge be attended with an increase of libertinism, and extravagance; and an evil spirit of infidelity, and profaneness, be at the same time gone abroad; yet is this neither so uncommon, nor unconformable to the course of Divine Providence in other respects, as to make us despair of seeing it attended with the usual consequences: we have still reason to trust, that when truth and knowledge have once fully got the better of error, bigotry and superstition, this spirit of reformation will reform, and rectify itself; and we shall have more and more of the true life and spirit of our religion, as

we

learning of the *moderns*, Refl. c, 28, and 29, and *Worthington* *Essay*, c, 8, and *Mosheim*, Eccl. Hist. Cent. 17, s, 1, xxv, &c. 8vo. How much all useful learning is indebted to the Gospel may be seen in *Jortin's Charge upon that Subject*, Disc. V. 7.

we draw nearer to those times, wherein the word of prophecy has fixed its reign.

I am far from imagining that *Christianity* is yet come to its mature state ; that it is understood in the whole extent, or held in its utmost purity and perfection, by any one church*. But, as when it was first preached, men were fit to hear, and profit by it in a competent degree ; as that was a proper time to divulge it, in order to improve the world ; which it did very considerably† ; excelling all former dispensations ; refining the conceptions, even of those who did not formally receive it‡ ; and yet was itself for some

* It will not be thought any imputation on *Christianity*, that all its mysteries and doctrines have not been as yet so fully discovered, and understood by the several sects and parties of *Christians*, as to come to a settled agreement concerning them ; if it be considered, that no human science hath been brought to such perfection as not to admit of farther improvements, many of which began to be cultivated long before the commencement of *Christianity*. Pref. to *Worthington's Essay*, p. 7. Comp. *Burnet, de Fid. et Off.* c. 5. p. 80. c. 8. p. 177. *Boehmer, Jus Eccl. Protestant.* p. 21, &c.

† See Bp. *Gibson's 2d Past. Lett.* or *Worthington's Essay*, c. 7.

‡ This is very visible in the writings of those philosophers who came shortly after its promulgation, as *Epicetus, Arrian, Plutarch, Max. Tyrius*, and more especially *Antoninus*, who is well acquainted with the *Christian* virtue of *Humility*, and frequently insists upon it. The like may be observed of *Porphyry* and *Hierocles*. [See passages in *Burnet, de Fid. et Off.* p. 29.] as also of *Seneca*, whom several ancient writers esteemed almost, if not altogether, a *Christian*. [See *Jones's method of settling the Canon*, Part iii. e. 12. sect. 3.] The like observation is made, with great justice, on their forms of devotion, by *Tortin, Disc.* p. 228, 229, and an instance added by *Owen*, [B. L. f. 23.] from *Arrian, L. ii. e. 7*, where he says the words καὶ πάντες διορθώσαντες αὐτούς, καὶ πάντες εἰπόντες, Deum invocantes, precamur eum, Domine miserere nostri. The same thing

some while but partially communicated*, and imperfectly understood: so now, 'tis of much greater advantage to the world in general; and yet still capable of increase; it waits for its own *fullness*: nor shall mankind receive the proper influence, and advantage of it, till their minds be much farther opened and enlarged, their reason more freely exercised, in this great *mystery* of divine love.

We cannot but be sensible, that the scriptures are very far from being thoroughly understood by us, who are of so reformed a church;—live under such an excellent government;—and in this enlightened age;—not even those parts of them which treat of past states, and dispensations; much less those which regard futurity. How long is it since men were so very ignorant of its doctrines, as to fix that horrid one of *absolute personal reprobation*, upon St. Paul himself? and it is to be feared, that almost equally hard things are yet believed of him, and some other inspired writers. We are still apt to confine the gospel of our Lord, as his primitive disciples for sometime did, to particular nations, churches, sects, opinions †;—to contend vehemently, either about

things

thing is owned by the emperor Julian, in his advice for a reformation of their philosophy, by taking in the *Christian* morals. Ep. ad Arsat. 49. Vid. Cave, Introd. p. 32, &c. Leng, B. Lect. fol. sect. 12. p. 111. Jenkin, Part iii. c. 5. p. 386. Whithy, 1 Cor. xv. 44.

* The several periods of this communication are accurately settled by the author of *Misc. Sac.* in his abstract of the Sac. Hist. and Pref. p. 14, &c.

† ' It has been the common disease of Christians from the beginning,

things in their own nature abstruse and difficult to be understood, and therefore not necessary to be determined ; or such lighter matters, as the ceremonies, circumstances, and outward forms of its administration† ; instead of explaining and recommending the true nature, end and import of it ; of being intent upon enlarging its real kingdom ; and taking care to maintain those works, which are intrinsically good,

and

beginning, not to content themselves with that measure of faith, which God and the scriptures have expressly afforded us ; but out of a vain desire to know more than is revealed, they have attempted to discuss things of which we can have no light, either from reason or revelation : neither have they rested here ; but upon pretence of church-authority, which is none ; or tradition, which for the most part is but figment ; they have peremptorily concluded, and confidently imposed upon others, a necessity of entertaining conclusions of that nature : and to strengthen themselves, have broken out into divisions and factions, opposing man to man, synod to synod, till the peace of the Church vanished, without all possibility of recal.' *J. Hales*, of Schism, p. 180. Comp. *Boehmer*, *Diff. Prelim. ad Jus Eccl. Protestant.* sect. 22, &c.

† 'The emperor *Justinian*, says *Job. Claubergius*, in his *Institutions*, did us the service, and himself the honour, by abrogating the scrupulous observation of stanch subtil forms and niceties, to reduce the study, and practice of the law to its native simplicity and plainness. It would be happy for the Christian world, could it find a man who would do so much in favour of theology ; who, rejecting litigious intricacies, needless curiosities, and vain niceties, which the school-philosophy has introduced into Theology ; would reinstate it in its ancient majestic purity. If, (what *Hen. Alting* slightly attempted,) under every head of divinity, verbal controversies were separated from real ; and in every controversy what did not concern the question in debate, was distinguished from what did ; a multitude of disputationes would be for ever silenced. But this is rather to be wished, than expected in our days ; as it is safer to lament the faults of our age than to reprove them.' *Werenfelsius* of *Logomachys*, Eng. p. 15. Lat. Ed. V. 1, p. 25. *De quo V. Stoll.* *Introd. ad Hist. Lit.* p. 571.

and ever profitable unto men* : instead of attending to that more excellent way, which the same apostle shewed us † ;—that bond of perfectness, which he has so earnestly exhorted us to put on above all things † ;—which he has taught us to esteem above all *faith*, and *knowledge*; and even the best miraculous gifts.

But though the face of Christianity be still miserably darkened, and deformed; though some nations seem to be in their *childhood* yet, and cannot receive it; and others grow so vicious and abandon'd as to be ready to reject it:—though in some ages it seems to have been hid in darkness, and sunk under ignorance and superstition; in others, born down with the torrent of licentiousness, and libertinism: yet, we have reason to conclude that upon the whole, its power is still visibly, or invisibly, enlarging over the world; and that it will always go on to do so, till

* *Tit.* iii. 8, 9. ‘The great offence—which in all nations, and in all ages, has hindered the propagation of the gospel of truth, has been a hypocritical zeal to secure by force a fictitious uniformity of opinion, which is indeed impossible in nature; instead of the real Christian unity of sincerity, charity, and mutual forbearance, which is the bond of perfectness.’ *Clarke, Ser. xviii. Vol. VI. 890.* ‘And yet among those who have embraced the gospel of Christ, there never was the least room for dispute about any fundamental; all Christians, at all times, and in all places, having ever been baptized into the profession of the same *faith*, and into an obligation to obey the same *commandments*. And it being notorious that all the contentions that ever arose in the Christian world, have been merely about the several *additions*, which every sect or party, in direct contradiction to the express command of their master, have endeavoured presumptuously to annex, by their own authority, to his *doctrines*, and to his *laws*.’ *Id. Serm. lxxx.*

† *1 Cor. xii. 31.*

‡ *Coloss. iii. 14.*

till the kingdom of *Christ* be fully come ;—till it be *within us*, and known by all, from the least to the greatest ;—till the *everlasting gospel** go forth, and be so thoroughly understood and embraced, as to bring on the *fulness of the Gentiles*; and by their means, the restoration of God's own people the *Jews*; as he has often foretold †; and so *the whole earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea*‡.

From hence it appears, that the objection mentioned in the beginning of these discourses, is really groundless ; and the several queries there urg'd admit of a sufficient reply.—That there is nothing in the time, and manner of the Christian dispensation, inconsistent with infinite wisdom and goodness :—that God is by no means partial, or arbitrary in the distribution of his blessings ; but at all times takes care of all mankind :—and that this great plan of revelation was carried on, in the best manner, for the world *in general*: which ought chiefly to be regarded by us, as it is in the eye of our common Father. When we come to particular ages, and nations, it is the same as with particular persons ; the same benefits

are

* *Rev. xiv. 6.*

† See the texts above, note (T) p. 189. Many more to the same purpose are collected in a note to Part ii. c. 11. p. 187. fol. of *Kidder's Dem.* To which may be added, *Whitby*, App. to Comm. on *Rom. xi.* and Treatise on the true *Millen.* c. 2. *Burnet*, de Stat. Mort. App. *Worthington's Essay*, p. 295. *Taylor* on *Rom. xi.* 26. p. 344. *Lowth* on *Isai. xi.* 11. Comp. *Fortin*, Rem. on E. H. Vol. III. p. 423, &c. and *Hallet*, Vol. III. Disc. x. and *Worthington*, B. Lect. S. 14. fin.

‡ *If. xi. 9. Hab. xi. 14.*

are not,—cannot be conferred on all; and the dispensations of religion become perfectly analogous to those of providence in the constant course of both the natural, and the moral world*. If Christ was to come once for all, he must appear in some particular time, and place; which could not be equally near to all the successive generations of mankind; nor could all have the same privileges, of seeing and conversing with him in the flesh; and as they are blessed who have not seen, and yet believed; so are they too effectually, (though perhaps in a lower degree) who having not so much as heard of *Christ*, are yet in a good measure qualified to receive his doctrine, were it fairly delivered to them.

The great scheme of our redemption in *Christ*, was laid before the world began†; and if we take that account which the Scriptures give of its design, we shall find the greatest of its benefits extended to all mankind; namely, the covenant for restoring the whole posterity of *Adam*, to that *immortality* which he forfeited. *The GIFT of GOD is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord*‡. Or, eternal life is not in any respect a property of our own nature, as derived from *Adam*; but an additional privilege conferred by God,

* See this more at large in Ep. Butler's *Analogy*, Part ii. c. 6, &c.

† Eph. i. 4. Col. i. 26. Tit. i. 2. 1 Pet. i. 20.

‡ Rom. vi. 23. Comp. v. 15. and Hallet's *Observat.* Vol. I. p. 326. &c. or Layton's *Tracts*, in 2 Volumes 4to, which contain an answer to all that was wrote in defence of the soul's natural Immortality in that author's time.

God, as the purchase of our Saviour and Redeemer Christ. Death was abolished, and life, and incorruptibility*, or a life in incorruption†, fixed in the divine decrees from the beginning, in view of Christ's future ransom‡; though not so fully brought to light, or published to the world in general, till its actual accomplishment.

As to any particular privileges that can be supposed to be annexed to the bare belief in him, or explicit profession of such belief; we have reason to suppose, that no less benefits were enjoyed by those good men of old, who by the dim light of prophecy, or tradition, beheld his day, and rejoiced in it; who saw these promises afar off, and were persuaded of them, and *embraced them*||. Faith in him to come was the same, in proportion to the evidence, as in him past; and must be equally virtuous or meritorious§. So far then it might be the same thing whenever he came.

And when we speak of the Christian scheme being necessary

* *Aρχαγωνία*, 2 Tim. i. 10. i. e. of the body raised, 1 Cor. xv. 52. That the Christian revelation of immortality lays the chief, if not the whole stress on a resurrection, is plain from the texts cited to that purpose by Benson on 1 Thess. iv. 13. See more to the same purpose, in the following discourse on the nature and end of death.

† 1 Cor. xv. 42, 53, 54 where the same word is used.

‡ Matt. xx. 28. Mark x. 45. Acts xv. 11, 18. Gal. iii. 17. Eph. i. 4. 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6. 2 Tim. i. 9. Heb. ix. 15. 1 Pet. i. 20. Rev. xiii. 8.

|| Heb. xi. 13. Gal. iii. 8.

§ See Denne's Serm. Prop. G. p. 53, &c. or Williams, B Lect. fol. sect. 8. p. 232, 233.

*necessary to salvation**, we should understand *salvation* in the scripture sense of that word ; as implying a particular *state* of happiness ; or as the *Christian's heaven†* ; not as the sole condition of enjoying everlasting *life* ; or as strictly necessary, in all men, to the avoiding absolute misery ; or escaping the pains of *hell*. He has told us, that in his Father's house are many *mansions* ; states suited to every degree of holiness, and virtue : and as it often appears that men under very different dispensations here, differ but almost insensibly from each other, in the abovementioned qualifications ; can we conceive, that their future states of retribution shall be so infinitely different, as those of *heaven*, and *hell*, are commonly believed to be ? No doubt, there are great advantages, and sure promises, belonging to those, who have been so happy as to be included in the *Christian covenant* ; and so honest as to hold it in faith, and purity. But let not such exclude others from the mercies of their common Lord ; or murmur at the *good man of the house*, if these also receive every man his *penny‡*. Whether they shall not sometime hereafter be called into the *vineyard*, and at length become acquainted with that person who has done so great things for them, as well as us || ; or what amends may be made them

* Pag. 41.

† See Rymer's Represent. of Rev. Rel. p. 104. or Whithy on Rom. ii. 14.

‡ Matt. xx.

|| See Stainoe's Enquiry into the State of those men in another life, who never heard of Christ in this, from Rev. xx.

them for the want of those advantages which we here enjoy ; is known only to that God of all mercies, in whose hands they are. What our Saviour said of the *Gentiles*, in contradistinction to the *Jews*, may be no less true between *Christians*, and the rest of the world, that never heard of *Christ*, but yet are prepared to enter, and in a good measure worthy to be admitted into his kingdom ;—who have duly attended to that *candle of the Lord*, which is set up in the breast of every man ; and which would naturally lead such persons to the clearer light of his gospel ;—*other sheep I have, which are not of this fold* ; *them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice* ; *and there shall be one fold and one shepherd**. To them likewise at length may the times of refreshing come, from the presence of the *Lord*†.—However, the case of such will undoubtedly be very different from that of those, who perversely, reject the counsel of God against themselves ; resolved to trust to their own strength, and going about to establish their own righteousness ; and not submitting themselves unto the righteousness of God ‡.

To conclude, with our blessed Saviour's admonition in reply to a like curious query ||, *If I will, that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.*

Let us, instead of judging others, or hastily determining of their respective states ; take care to set a due value on, and to secure our own salvation : instead

* Job. i. 16. Comp. Matt. viii. 11. and Luke xiii. 29.

† Acts iii. 19. Comp. Rom. viii. 22.

‡ Rom. x. 3.

|| John xxi. 22.

stead of charging God foolishly, and ungratefully, for not having imparted the same benefits to all men, which we enjoy ; let us rather be giving him particular thanks for this his *unspeakable Gift* ; and endeavour to employ it to his glory. Let us be intent on studying the word of God ; and careful to interpret it in such a manner, as may do honour to its author ; and at all times encourage a free and an impartial examination of it §. 'Tis now high time to do this,

~~and~~

§ I must here beg leave to refer the reader, to that excellent conclusion, which accompanies Bp. *Hare's difficulties, and discouragements in the study of the scriptures.* Supposed to have been written by Dr. S. Clarke. Dr. Benson's note on the last verse of 2 Pet. iii. is likewise so very opposite to the case in hand, that I cannot avoid citing some part of it. ' This may reprove those slothful Protestants, who will not read the scriptures, with that care and attention, which is requisite to the understanding of them :—and much more those, who are professed enemies to increasing knowledge ; who would have all new discoveries carefully suppressed ; and would have Christians steadily adhere to the articles and traditions received from their fallible forefathers : i. e. We are never to gain more knowledge, never (by any means) to grow wiser. Whereas, what reason can be assigned, why we should not reject the mistakes of our forefathers, as they rejected those of the church of *Rome*, and of their forefathers ? They who are afraid of *new light*, and increasing knowledge, seem to betray a bad cause, and to be conscious that their opinions will not stand the test of a severe examination. And they plainly contradict this advice, or direction of St. Peter, *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*'

Some excellent rules for studying the holy scriptures, may be found in *Jeffery's Discourses on 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16, 17.* Take the following specimen of his taste and temper. ' If to this [the history of the occasion of each discourse in the epistles] be added some *literal* rather than *doctrinal* exposition ; and men come to the word of God to fetch their religious opinions from thence, and do not, for the governing the sense of the scriptures, bring their opinions with them thither ; this, with an honest and good heart, will help men to understand the truths of God, and the truths of religion. And he that is thus taught of God, being

and to awake out of sleep, since our visitation is much nearer than when we first believed : and it is devoutly to be wished, that we ourselves could be persuaded to examine our own state, before others are obliged to do it for us* ; that we were heartily disposed to help and forward, rather than check, the progress of every serious enquiry ; and stop any farther improvements in the knowledge of that,

which

being the disciple of him and his Son, shall have an idea of religion most pure and divine.'—Tracts, Vol. II. p. 259. 'This would appear fully to every judicious Christian, if the folly of men had not mixed itself with the wisdom of God ; and the doctrine of Christianity had been preserved in the original purity and simplicity, with which it was delivered by the Divine Author, and such as it is still in the divine records which are the standard thereof. What these mixtures and adulterations of the doctrine of religion are, which have prevailed in any place or age, need not be named to him, who is resolved to answer the character of a disciple of Christ, and to admit nothing for Christianity or any part of it, but what is taught of God. And if with this caution, men enquire after the truth, as it is in Jesus, they shall easily find it in the holy scriptures, without any alloy : though it be never so hard to find it anywhere else. If after such inquiry and information, the man has judgment to discern the differences that are between one part of religion, and another; as before he did discern the differences that are, between one part of the holy scriptures, and another, he shall establish such a notion of religion, and such a method of studying it, that no seducer can alienate him from his religion ; no time can make him weary of searching into it. He will find an entertainment to his mind, for ever in the contemplation of God, according to the manifestations he has made of himself in his word, and by his works : and the employment of heaven, which will be eternal, is happily begun on earth. Happy is the man, who hath from his youth been accustomed to this exercise ! his improvement will be great, and his end blessed.' ib. p. 260.

* ' Is it not a standing argument that Religion has been too much confined in all countries, that the body of the Clergy have never reformed themselves ; and that all Reformations have ever been forced upon them, and have generally been attended with the most horrible persecutions, and dangerous convulsions in the state?' *Priestley on Civ. Gov.* p. 138.

which of all things deserves, and wants it most ;— rather than withstand a general reformation in religion, by rigorously insisting on, and obtruding such things for doctrine, as are found to be the commandments of men, and very foreign to the essence of Christianity, instead of either entertaining that anti-christian kind of spirit, which calls down fire from heaven on all who don't immediately receive us ; which delights in straitening the way that leads to life, and shutting others out from the kingdom of heaven ; or incurring the woe denounced against those hypocrites, who are desirous of lading men with heavy burdens,—with binding upon them things which are too grievous to be born ; and which they know or might know, that none need touch with one of their fingers*.

As

† * The next step towards the increase of Christ's kingdom must be a farther improvement of Christianity, and of those who receive and profess it. The church of *Rome* is not the only church that wants amendment. Other Christian societies, which have separated themselves from her, and from her grosser defects, are departed more or less from the original simplicity of the gospel, and have mixed some doctrines of men with the word of God, and so stand in need of some improvement. It is therefore to be hoped, that a time will come when religion will have a fairer and a more alluring aspect ; when Christians will be united, not in opinion as to all theological points ; for that is impossible, whilst men are men ; but that they will be united in benevolence and charity, in intercommunion, and in one *common and simple profession of faith.*" *Jortin's Remarks on E. H.* Vol. III. p. 445. Comp *Le Clerc, de eligenda inter dissentientes Christianos sententia*, annexed to his Ed. of *Grot. de Ver. Rel. Christ.*

* *Matt. xxiii. Luke xi.* "That religion which has no goodness, has no truth in it : for the religion, which God has given us, is entirely for our good. *Sobriety* is good ; for the individual in the first instance, and for the society in the second. *Righteousness*

As we see the faults and follies of past ages, a double woe will be upon us, if, instead of taking warning by them, and avoiding the like; we are resolved to tread the same steps, and thereby fill up the measure of our fathers.

Let *us*, then, who have opportunity afforded us for this purpose, think on these things, and study to discern *the signs of the times*; that we may be prepared for them, and profit by them: that we may not only save ourselves in the day of trouble, but also contribute somewhat to the safety of our *Jerusalem*; and be ready to watch over and defend it, whenever, or from what quarter soever, the enemy cometh.

As we live in a more enlightened age, and are intrusted with a greater share of talents; let us be persuaded to walk worthy of it, and endeavour to excel others as much in our improvements. Above all things let us labour to bring forth the genuine fruits of our religion, in true holiness and virtue; and daily draw nigh unto God, in the imitation of his *moral perfections*; which is the sum and substance, the great end and aim, of all *religion*.

ness is good; for the society in the first instance, and for the individual in the second. *Godliness* is good for both; as it enforces sobriety and righteousness; and as it engages the protection of the supreme Governor of the world. There is nothing in Christianity but these; and what is subservient to these; and such a religion none who understand their own good, and wish well to others, can either be desirous or willing to be discharged from.' *Jeffery on Phil. i. 10.* Vol. II. p. 380. a piece well worthy the perusing.

PART

z-logs fig to collect but didn't get it so we
guitar is broken so we need to buy new strings
so we could play guitar but we still can't play
so we will go back home again but have to go to bed

and the like. The first of these is the *Book of the Dead*, which is a collection of spells and incantations, and the second is the *Book of the Great Pyramid*, which contains the names of the stars and the constellations. The third is the *Book of the Sun*, which contains the names of the sun and the moon, and the fourth is the *Book of the Stars*, which contains the names of the stars. The fifth is the *Book of the Moon*, which contains the names of the moon and the stars. The sixth is the *Book of the Sun and the Moon*, which contains the names of the sun and the moon. The seventh is the *Book of the Stars and the Moon*, which contains the names of the stars and the moon. The eighth is the *Book of the Sun and the Stars*, which contains the names of the sun and the stars. The ninth is the *Book of the Moon and the Stars*, which contains the names of the moon and the stars. The tenth is the *Book of the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars*, which contains the names of the sun, the moon, and the stars. The eleventh is the *Book of the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars, and the like*, which contains the names of the sun, the moon, and the stars, and the like.

and the first time that we have seen a visible sign of energy in the atmosphere, which has been very quiet. The wind is a gentle breeze from the south west, and the sun is bright. The sky is clear and the air is still.

P A R T III.

The PROGRESS of Natural RELIGION and SCIENCE,

O R

The continual Improvement of the *World in general.*

Antiquity I unfeignedly honour and reverence ; but why I should be bound to reverence the rust and refuse, the dross and dregs, the warts and awens thereof, I am yet to seek.—As in the little so in the great world, reason will tell you, that old age, or antiquity, is to be accounted by the farther distance from the beginning, and the nearer approach to the end : and as grey beards are for wisdom and judgment to be preferred before young green heads, because they have more experience in affairs ; so likewise for the same cause, the present times are to be preferred before the infancy or youth of the world, having the history and practice of former ages to inform us, which they wanted.—In disgracing the present times therefore, you disgrace antiquity properly so called.

HAKEWILL, Apol. B. v. p. 133.

Certainly every Medicine is an INNOVATION ; and he that will not apply new Remedies must expect new Evils : for time is the greatest INNOVATOR : and if Time of course alter things for the worse, and Wisdom and Council shall not labour to alter them for the better, what will be the end ?

BACON, Ep. xxiv.

III ТЯКЪ

The PROGRESS of

MISCELLANEOUS AND SCIENTIFIC

OR

The Commercial Improvement of the
Mills in Germany

It is well known that the progress of the mills in Germany has been rapid during the last few years. The introduction of the steam engine has greatly increased the power of the mills, and the use of iron has enabled them to be built more easily and inexpensively. The mills in Germany are now among the largest and most powerful in the world. They are used for the manufacture of cotton, wool, silk, and other fabrics, and for the production of various articles of commerce. The mills in Germany are also used for the manufacture of paper, glass, and other articles. The mills in Germany are now among the largest and most powerful in the world. They are used for the manufacture of cotton, wool, silk, and other fabrics, and for the production of various articles of commerce. The mills in Germany are also used for the manufacture of paper, glass, and other articles.

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The Progress of
Natural Religion and Science,
O R
The continual Improvement of the
World in general.

E C C L E S. VII. 10.

*Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days
were better than these? for thou dost not enquire
wisely concerning this.*

THE badness of the times, has been a common topic of complaint in every age;* and that they are growing worse and worse continually, is what some persons think themselves obliged to insist upon, how hard soever they find it to account for this perpetual depravation. The former of these arguments, if urged only to expose and give a check to some particular, predominant vices, (for which indeed all ages have afforded too much room) may

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* See Dr. Ibbot's Serm. on New Year's Day, v. 1. sect. 16.
compare Bp. Fleetwood's Charge at his Primary Visitation at Ely.

O

some times be of use, and often necessary. But when the latter is added to it, and both carried so far as to make us discontented, and uneasy with ourselves, and burdensome to one another;—to set us a quarrelling with the station, and society, in which we are placed;—a murmuring at, and speaking evil of the government we live under;—despising every human dominion, and even repining at the conduct of divine Providence; and mistaking the issue of its dispensations to such a degree as must confound our judgment, and unhinge our faith in the unlimited goodness, power, and wisdom of their Author:—when things are come to such a pass, 'tis high time to correct an error of this kind, and enquire into the true state, and history of the world, in the above-mentioned particular.

In order to which, I purpose in the first place,

I. To shew the falsity of this complaint in several respects.

II. Secondly, To point out some of its ill consequences; which may be sufficient to justify the Preacher's observation in the text, *viz.* that this way of judging is no very *wise* one.

The design of the book from which these words are taken, was to examine into the course of this present world in general; to consider the nature of its enjoyments, and the ends proposed by us in our pursuit of them. No one saw farther into these things, or better understood their real value; none perhaps had

had a mind more elevated, and refined above them ; or could in a more lively manner, display the vanity and emptiness thereof on some occasions, than king Solomon ; yet, where he meets with such persons as treat the subject so very injudiciously, that they both disparage the works of God, by representing them to be ever going backward, and on the decline ; and distract the minds of men, by teaching them to undervalue, and grow weary of the present benefits, through an invidious retrospect to former days :— when matters are placed in this light, we find him absolutely disapproving of the view, and all those questions which arise from thence ; intimating, that the very foundation of them is not *true* in fact.

To make this appear more fully, let us consider some of the advantages of life, both *natural* and *acquired* ; in order to see, whether there be any signs that these are now dispensed in a less liberal way than formerly ; or whether the reverse is not more probable.

As to the fruitfulness of the earth, and clemency of seasons ; the temperature of the air, and influence of heavenly bodies ; the vulgar mistake of their continual decay, and tendency to dissolution, has, long since been exploded *.

Whatever

* A sufficient confutation of it may be seen in *Hakewill*, Apol. passim. There is a little book wrote on the same subject by *Jo. Jonstonus*, a *Polander*, and entitled *de Natura Constantia*, Ed. *Amstel.* 1632. which contains some valuable observations, though

Whatever might have been the employment of man, had he continued innocent; (who must have been originally designed for some employment, since we find *Adam* not exempted from the care of *dressing*, and *keeping* that spot of ground in which he was placed*;) upon his fall, a state of greater toil and labour became necessary; in order to secure the virtue, health, and greater safety of the species, in any tolerable degree†: on which account the earth is represented as lying under an extraordinary *curse*, of barrenness; which has been generally thought to have continued, and received considerable addition at the *deluge*; and very plausible reasons were assigned for this opinion‡; till a learned prelate|| shewed us from the circumstances of the history, that the direct contrary was fact§. For some time afterwards, the longevity of mankind

though the author owns that his work is chiefly extracted from *Hakewill*, p. 160.

That some climates are more mild and temperate now, than they were in former times, See *Hume's Essays Mor. Polit. &c.* Ess. xi. Add *Phil. Transf.* V. 58. No. 9. and that this is chiefly owing to the lands being better cultivated, may be seen in *Observations on the Statutes*, p. 189, and 321. 2d Ed.

* *Gen. ii. 15.*

† See *King Or. of E.* p. 172. note 33. 4th Ed. and the authors there referred to. To which add *Worthington's Essay on Man's Redemption*, who has treated this point more particularly, c. 3. p. 64, &c.

‡ These are collected in *Univ. Hist.* Vol. I. p. 106.

|| *Bp. Sherlock, Use and Intent of Proph. Disc.* iv. Comp. *Worthington* on the same subject, Ess. p. 84, &c.

§ The great fertility of the earth immediately after the deluge, is what some think, gave rise to the stories of the *Golden Age* among the Poets;

— cum fruges tellus inarata serebat,
Nec renovatus ager grāvidis canebat Arifis, &c.

mankind was very necessary, for peopling the world, and learning arts**; though I should think it difficult to point out the natural causes of this longevity, and the following changes; at least, such as can be consistent with the forementioned opinion*. Since, if the earth was corrupted to such a degree at the universal deluge, as to lay a foundation for the shortening the period of human life; this effect, one would imagine, should have been more evident, while these same causes must be fresh, and operate most strongly: not to repeat the proof, that this supposed corruption is a vulgar error. This great change therefore, seems to have been owing to a positive appointment of the Deity, distinct from, and subsequent to that of

Noah's

** See *Hakerwill*, p. 42. *Joseph.* L. i. c. 3. *Winder*, p. 78, 79. *Le Clerc* on *Gen.* v. 27. Cum pauci essent homines in terris, necesse erat parentes diu vivere, ut liberis suis auxilio essent, et se contra feras, aliaque vitæ incommoda, una tutarentur: alioqui si parentes sæpe liberos impuberes orbos reliquissent, aut ea ætate interiissent, qua liberi rudiores nondum sibi satis prospicere poterant, de multis familiis actum fuisset. Cum omnia experientia discerentur, neque ea posset in liberos adolescentes transmitti; ut ea posteris usui esset, diu cum illis parentes vivere oportuit.—Hæc certe longævitatis in rudi ætate et scribendi imperitia, ad historiæ et annorum certam memoriam servandam plane necessaria erat: cum nec sic quidem satis incolumis ad nos pervenerit. Id. ib.

* Some of the supposed ones are set down by the last mentioned writer; who after all, is forced to recur to a particular Providence for the event, with the noted *Rabbi*, who determines it to have been *Opus Providentiae, non Naturae*. Comp. *Buddei Hist. Eccl.* Vol. I. p. 151. or *Dawson* on *Gen.* iv, v. p. 59, 67. *Worthington* supposes a decay in the constitution of *Noah's* sons immediately occasioned by the rains and waters of the deluge, Ep. p. 74, &c. Had such a cause been adequate to the effect, would there not have been some appearance of its taking place much sooner; and not by halves, and at such distant periods; as in the following note?

Noah's flood, and introduced for reasons which took place some ages after it ; and may be conceived as a *new dispensation*, necessary for the future government of the world, in every age (v). However, in *David's*

time,

(v) See *Taylor* on *Orig. Sin*, p. 67. 'When God had determined in himself, and promised to *Noah*, never to destroy the world again by such an universal destruction, till the last and final judgment ; it was necessary, by degrees, to shorten the lives of men ; which was the most effectual means to make them more governable, and to remove bad examples out of the world ; which would hinder the spreading of the infection ; and people, and reform the world again by new examples of piety and virtue : for when there are such quick successions of men, there are few ages, but have some great and brave examples, which give a new and better spirit to the world.' *Sherlock* on *Death*, c. 3. sect. 2. 'Sin brought death in first, and yet man lived almost a thousand years. But he sinned more, and then death came nearer to him : for when all the world was first drowned in wickedness, and then in water, God cut him shorter by one half ; and five hundred years was his ordinary period. And man sinned still, and had strange imaginations, and built towers in the air ; and then about *Peleg's* time, God cut him shorter by one half yet ; two hundred and odd years was his determination. And yet the generations of the world returned not unanimously to God ; and God cut him off another half yet, and reduced him to an hundred and twenty years.—But if God had gone on still in the same method, and shortened our days as we multiplied our sins ; we should have been but as an *Ephemeron* : man should have lived the life of a fly, or a gourd.—But God seeing *Man's thoughts were only evil continually*, he was resolved no longer to strive with him, nor destroy the kind, but punish individuals only, and single persons ; and if they sinned, or if they did obey, regularly their life should be proportionable.' *Taylor*, *Life of Christ*, p. 305. I shall here add the observation of a friend, which is connected with the present subject.—It is very plain by the unoccupied spaces and superfluous produce of the earth, that it was intended to be inhabited by many myriads more than ever existed upon it, and whose existence has only been prevented or cut short by the unrighteous inventions of men ; this complete replenishing of the earth, would probably have been the consequence of *Adam's* obedience ; but his fall having broken in upon this scheme, it became the wise and good providence of God to limit the generations of men to a certain

time, we find the life of man fixed to the same length *in general* that it has at present*; and ever since, have reason to believe, that the constitution of mankind in general, as well as the state of the earth, and heavens, whereon that must ever depend; have, at all times, been much the same as we now find them†; and may rest satisfied, that the original promise

tain proportion, and to keep the balance in such sort, that maugre all the inventions of men themselves to prolong human life, or to increase the species, the earth should never be stocked with inhabitants beyond such a proportion, till they were duly disposed to apply the aids and expedients of religion to their preservation and felicity. To multiply mankind, while iniquity abounds, and the love of so large a majority is waxen cold; or in other words, to replenish the earth, whilst the appetites of its inhabitants are so inflamed, would only be to multiply new generations of cut-throats, and oppressors, whose engrossing maw would quickly reduce the species to [perhaps far below] the ordinary proportion.

* *The days of our years, are three score years and ten, &c.* Pl. xc. 10. This is entitled a prayer of *Moses*, but cannot be of that date which the title imports, since in *Moses's* time, most of the persons mentioned in Scripture lived to an age far exceeding that standard.

† See Sir W. Temple's Works, Vol. I. p. 276, &c. Sir T. P. Blount, Ess. iv. p. 188, 192, &c. or Ld. Bacon's Hist. of Life and Death. Hakewill, B. iii. c. 1. sect. 7, &c. Hist. of Carriby Islands, B. ii. c. 24.

That the stature of man in this age is the same as it was near three thousand years ago, appears from Greaves's account of the monument in the Egyptian pyramid. Derham, Phys. Theol. B. v. c. 4. note 4. Add Diff. Crit. de Hominibus specie et ortu inter se non differentibus, c. 4. inter Fabricii Opusc. Hamb. 1738; and Hakewill, B. iii. c. 3, 4, 5. and some late accounts of several tribes among the Patagonians. The same observation is made of man's age, by Plot, N. H. of Staffordshire, c. 8. sect. 102. Of his strength, by Hakewill, B. iii. c. 5. sect. 5. That we have had several very late instances of persons, whose longevity exceeded that of the patriarchal age, may be seen in Worthington's Essay, p. 417, Comp. Huet. Alnet. Quæst. L. ii. c. 12. sect. 4. Morton's N. Hist. of Northamptonshire, c. 8. Jonston. de Naturæ constantia,

mise has been, and will be made good ; that *while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease** ; and therefore may conclude, that the distribution, and enjoyment of, what I call, the *natural advantages* of life, is so far from a constant decline, that these have been at all times in themselves pretty equal ; and rather improving†, as they receive assistance, which they do very greatly from the *acquired ones* ; which we are in the next place to consider.

The late invention of *arts and sciences* is usually insisted on, and very justly, in our disputes with *atheists*, against the *eternity* of the world ; and their continual *progress*, though perhaps seldom attended to, seems to be a point no less necessary to complete the argument. For if it can be shewn, either that these which we now have, or others of equal use, were discovered long ago ; and dropt again, and subject to their several revolutions ; as has been asserted by a profligate writer § ; why should not we grant from *analogy*, that

the

constantia, Prop. v. Art. i. 11. *Campbell's political Survey*, C. 4. It appears from the *London accounts* during the interval of thirty years, viz. from 1728 to 1757 inclusive, that 2979 persons were living at 90, 2 at 100, 10 at 110, and 1 at 138. Phil. Trans. Vol. LII. Part i. Art. 11.

* *Gen. viii. 22.*

† The comparative mildness of the *Seasons*, is shewn by *Hume*. Polit. Disc. x. Eff.

§ ‘*Arts and sciences grow up, flourish, decay, die, and return again under the same or other forms, after periods which appear long to us, however short they may be, compared with the*

the world itself has undergone the like changes? that the same time and chance has happened to all things concerning it, and its inhabitants?—But that there actually have been such vicissitudes in nature; or so much as one valuable art, or very useful branch of science, wholly lost since the creation, I know no ground sufficient to believe(v).

In

the immense duration of the systems of created being. These periods are so disproportionate to all human means of preserving the memory of things, that when the same things return, we take frequently for a new discovery, the revival of an art or science long before known.' Ld. *Bolingbroke*, Ess. iii. p. 236. See also his *Letter*, occasioned by one of Abp. *Tillotson's Sermons*; Works, Vol. III. p. 265, &c. The same wild system, has since been supported by *Toulmin*, antiquity and duration of the world 1780.

(v) For proof of this, see the pretended instances of lost arts in *Pancirollus*, which, upon examination, will appear all to be either manifestly false, or frivolous; or of such trifles as have been dropt by disuse. ' In what *Pancirollus* says of certain arts, which according to him were known to the ancients, and have been since lost, there are almost as many mistakes and puerilities as words: The arts which he speaks of, either never existed, or they exist to this day, and in a more perfect state than ever.' *Goguet*, Pref. p. 7.* To which may be added *Wotton's Pref. to Rel. on anc. and mod. L.* ' I will agree—that several arts in the world have been lost, and others, after a time again, revived; but then these have been such arts as have been more curious than useful; and have rather been ornamental, than beneficial to mankind; and there has been some good reason to be given for their disuse; either by their growing out of fashion, or by some more easy and commodious invention. Thus the art of *glass-painting* was lost about the time of the Reformation†, when the images

of

† This seems to be a vulgar error. See *glass-painting* in *Chamher's Cycloedia*, or *Spectacle de la Nature*, Vol. III. p. 219. or Mr. *Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting*. Vol. II. p. 15, &c.

Of *Cement*, Spect. ib. p. 228. Add *Motte's Abr. Phil. Trans.* Vol. II. Part iv. p. 62, 63. From hence it may be concluded, that the firmness of that *Cement*, which is observable in old walls, &c.

In a history of the world, which has been proved by a late unexceptionable writer *, to be of all others by far the most ancient and authentic, and which carries its accounts as high as could be expected, from any history; even to the forming and first peopling of the world itself, and the original division of the nations: in this, we have the birth and genealogy, the names and characters, of the several founders of each state and kingdom; as well as the inventors even of manual

of saints were not so highly esteemed, and churches began to be more gravely adorned. Thus the use of *archers* in an army, has been laid aside since the invention of pikes and guns. But who can imagine that the art of the smith, and the carpenter, should ever be forgot after the first invention; unless we could suppose that houses, and all sorts of utensils and conveniences, should grow out of fashion; and it would be the mode for men to live like colts and wild asses? Unless men could be supposed to forget the use of eating and drinking, I am confident they could never forget the art of plowing and sowing, and pressing the grape.[†] *Nicholls's Conf.* Part i. And the same may be said of navigation, notwithstanding all that Ld. *Bolingbroke* advances to the contrary. *Eff.* iii. p. 236. See more of this in *Wotton's Pref.* p. 14, &c. 2d Ed. Comp. Mod. Part of *Univ. Hist.* B. xviii. c. 12, Sect. 6. *Fin. and Goguet*, on the origin of Laws, Arts, and Sciences, or the Chron. Index of inventions and improvements, in *Biogr. Brit.* vol. ult.

* *Newton, Chron.*

m/ &c. Must in a great measure be the effect of time, and owing more to the attractive contiguity, of its several ingredients, and the continual trans-fudation of that Lime, Nitre, Salts, &c. of which the Mortar consists, than to any peculiar skill shewn by the ancients in its original composition.

If Monsr. *Loriot's* so much celebrated discovery † of a *Cement*, made by *quick lime*, equal to that which he has attributed to the *Greeks* and *Romans*, were of much consequence in this case, we should in all probability have heard more of it since its first publication.

† See his *Practical Essay* on that subject, reprinted, London, 1774.

manual arts, delivered down (w); and from the sober air of truth, and that simplicity which runs through the whole relation; have much more reason to depend upon it, than on the boasting fabulous antiquities of *Greece* and *Egypt*: to obviate which, was probably one great design of the relator (x). From whom

(w) *Cain builded a city*, or the first city, Gen. iv. 17. add Gen. x. 8, 9, &c. *Jabal was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle: and his brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all such as handle the harp and the organ: and Tubal Cain was an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron; or a forger of arms.* Gen. iv. 20, &c. After the flood, *Noah began to be a husbandman, and he planted a vineyard,* Gen. ix. 20. or being a husbandman, he planted vines together, and improved the fruit of them, [v. *Cleric. or Patrick* in loc.] So late as *Abraham's time*, we find there was enough of the best land unoccupied for both him and *Lot*, to chuse out of; Gen. xiii. 9. which (as the author of *Biblioth. Bibl.* observes, p. 335.) is a most illustrious testimony for the late peopling of the world, and by consequence for the truth of the *Mosaic* history of the creation and deluge; in as much as it appears by this, that the most pleasant and most fruitful country of the whole earth, and which, in a few hundreds of years afterward, was so exceeding populous; was yet in the days of *Abraham* so very thinly peopled, that even large tracts were left in a manner uncultivated and without proprietor. So little ground is there for that assertion of *Ld. Bolingbroke*, on which he builds very largely: ‘Nations were civilized, wise constitutions of government were framed, arts and sciences were invented and improved, long before the remotest time to which any history, or tradition extends.’ Vol. IV. p. 231.

(x) *Historia sua Moses Israelitarum animos a vicinorum fabulis, adeoque religionibus, quæ sœpe iis nitebantur, alienare adgreditus est.*—Non modo mundum creatum docet, quod videntur etiam credidisse, vel potius ex veteribus monumentis scivisse, vicini; sed etiam quot fuissent ætates ab initio mundi ad sua tempora ostendit, singulasque personas generatas enumeravit, ut ingenti illi numero ætatum, qui ab Ægyptiis jaetabatur, et in sua quidem regione fuisse dicebatur, verum opponeret.—Vide *Jactationes Ægyptiorum de gentis suæ antiquitate apud Ezek. xxix. 3.* et quæ habemus ad *Num. xiii. 23.* At ostendit Moses, *Gen. x. 6.* post diluvium demum a Chami posteris, a Babylone illuc profectis,

whom we learn, that neither the planting of the world, nor the introduction of arts and sciences, were of so early a date, as they have usually been represented*.

Most

fectis, fuisse cultam Ægyptum. Plurima etiam de generatione hominum in sua regione, deque diluvio, mentiebantur Ægyptii; quæ habet Diodor. L. i. Multa jactabant de rerum omnium apud se inventione, quæ apud eundem leguntur. Quorum pleraque obiter confutat Moses alia plane narratione, aliisque rerum inventoribus indicatis. Vide quæ diximus ad Gen. iv. 21, 22. Ofriди etiam suo agricultvræ, et vini e racemis exprimendi inventionem tribuebant Ægyptii, quæ Noachi fuit, ut docet Moses Cap. ix. 20. Cleric. Proleg. ad Comm. Diff. iii. de script. Pent. p. 37. Id. in indice ad *Vineam*—Originem etiam musicæ, quanquam initio rudis, omittere noluisse videtur Moses, ut ostenderet mentiri Ægyptios, qui ejus inventionem Thouthi Ægyptio, amico Ofridis, qui post diluvium vixit, acceptam ferebant. Diod. Sic. L. i. p. 15. Ed. Rhod. Plato de Leg. ii. p. 577. Tubal-Cainem quoque omne æris et ferri opificium expolientem, contra Ægyptios a Mose memoratum credibile est; illi in Ægypto, regnante Ofride, dictabant, in Thebaide aeris et auri cudendi inventis artibus, arma esse facta, quibus occidendo feras, et terram colendo, eam studiose cultiorem redderent, et q. seq. ap. Diod. L. i. p. 14. Id. in Gen. iv. 21, 22. Num. xiii. 23. Chebron quidem septem annis ante Ægyptiacam Tanin condita fuerat.—Obiter retundit Moses Ægyptiorum superbiam, qui se primos mortalium, suaque proinde urbes omnium antiquissimas jactabant, Ezek. xxix. 3. Diod. Sic. L. i. Bibl. p. 9. Justin. L. ii. e. 1. Cleric. in Num. xiii. 22. Comp. id. in Es. xviii. 2.

* “Though Noah and his sons had, doubtless, some knowledge of the inventions of the Antediluvians, and probably acquainted their descendants with such of them as were most obvious and useful in common life; yet it is not to be imagined that any of the more curious arts, or speculative sciences, were improved in any degree, supposing them to have been known or invented; till some considerable time after the dispersion.—For on their settling in any country, they found it employment sufficient to cultivate the land (which yet for want of separate property, and security in their possessions, in those early times, they improved no farther than barely to supply their necessities) and to provide themselves habitations and necessaries, for their mutual comfort and subsistence

Most nations, like private families, have at all times been fond of carrying up their pedigree as high as possible*; and where no marks remained of the successive alterations in their state, were apt to imagine that it had always been the same. Hence the many foolish pretences among the ancients, to their being *Aborigines* of the countries they had inhabited time out of mind: hence were they led to make their several *gods* the founders of their government †. They knew but very little of the world; and the tradition which they had of that little, was so far blended and corrupted with romance, that it served only to confound them ‡. Upon the removal of this cloud,

by

silence*. Besides this, they were often obliged to remove from one place to another, where they could more conveniently reside; and it was a great while before they came to embody themselves together in towns and cities; and from thence to spread into provinces; and to settle the bounds and extent of their territories†. Two or three ages at least must have been spent in this manner; and it is not very likely they should amuse themselves with celestial observations in particular, when they had so many more pressing affairs to mind.' *Univ. Hist.* B. i. c. 2. p. 173.

* *V. Macpherson, Origin of ancient Caledonians, &c. Diff. I.*

† *Datur hæc venia antiquitati, ut miscendo humana divinis, primordia urbium augstiora faciat;* says *Liv. Pref. Hist. L. i.* very honestly, The same humour among Christian countries, of carrying up the original of their churches either to some apostle, or apostolical person, is no less honestly censured by *Moshem. de Rebus Christ. ante Const. M. p. 84, &c.*

‡ The grounds of the uncertainty of ancient history, may be seen in *Stillingfleet, Or. Sac. B. i. c. 1. sect. 16. 18, &c. Comp. Bryant's accurate acct. of it. pass.* Of the *Egyptian* in particular, see *Shaw's Travels, p. 417. 442. Comp. Baker on Hist. and Chron.*

* *Vid. Thucyd. L. i. sub in.*

† *Stillingfleet, Or. S. B. i. c. 1. sect. 16. .*

by the more diligent, and accurate enquiry of the moderns, we see ancient history beginning to clear up, even at this distance ; the world puts on a very different face ; and all parts of it appear conformable to each other, and to the late well known course of things ; as is made out very clearly, in various instances, by a learned and ingenious writer*.—We find the *marvellous* in all the annals of these times, and more especially in the great point of their antiquity, exceedingly reduced† ; and our own plain accounts still more and more confirmed : from which

we

Chron. Reflect. c. 10, and 11. *Shuckford*, Vol. II. B. viii. *Winder*, Vol. II. c. 10. sect. 4, &c. *Bp. Clayton's Remarks on the Origin of Hieroglyphicks*, p. 58, &c. *Goguet*, Vol. III. Diff. iii. p. 269. That the *Babylonish* empire was not so old as has been pretended, See *Le Clerc*, on *Gen. x. 10*. Concerning the fabulous antiquity of the *Chineſe*, See *Conclusion of Mod. II. Hist.* p. 95. Fol.

* *V. Bryant Analysis* pass.

† ‘ Till men come to a scrutiny, they are very apt to imagine that a number is vastly greater than it is. I have often asked people to guess how many men there have been in a direct line between the present king of *England* and *Adam*, meaning only one man in a generation ; the king’s father, grandfather, &c. The answer made upon a sudden conjecture, has always been, *some thousand* ; whereas it is evident from a calculation, there have not been two hundred. For the space of time between *Adam* and *Chrif*, let us take the genealogy of our Saviour, preserved by *St. Luke*, in which the names between *Adam* and *Chrif*, exclusive of both, are but seventy-four. From the birth of *Chrif* to the birth of the king, were sixteen hundred and eighty years. Let it be supposed, that in the list of the king’s progenitors, every son was born when his father was twenty five years old, which is as early as can be supposed, one with another. According to this supposition, there were four generations in every hundred years : i. e. in those sixteen hundred and eighty-three years, there were sixty-seven generations ; which sixty-seven, added to the foregoing seventy-four, will make no more than a hundred and forty-one.’ *Hallet on Heb. xi. 7.* Note a. p. 17. Comp. *Goguet*, Vol. III. Diff. iii. pr. *Bryant Anal. Anot. Mythol.* pass.

we may be convinced, that both the peopling and cultivation of the earth arose at first from a few, low beginnings; very gradually spread itself from some one center*: and that it has at all times proceeded by pretty

* This has been observed by *J. Casaubon* in one respect, viz. in relation to language. *Est enim verissimum*, says he, *linguas caeteras eo manifestiora et magis expressa originis Hebraicae vestigia servasse, et nunc servare, quo proprius ab antiqua et prima hominum sede absuerunt, &c.* A confirmation of it in some other respects, may be had from the following *very remarkable* particular, as *Hartley* justly calls it; *Observ. on man*, V. II. p. 113. * It appears from history, that the different nations of the world have had, *caeteris paribus*, more or less knowledge, civil and religious, in proportion as they were nearer to, or had more intimate communication with, *Egypt*, *Palaestine*, *Chaldea*, and the other countries that were inhabited by the most eminent persons amongst the first descendants of *Noah*; and by those who are said in scripture to have had particular revelations made to them by God: and that the first inhabitants of the extreme parts of the world, reckoning *Palaestine* as the center, were in general mere savages. Now all this is utterly inexplicable upon the footing of Infidelity; of the exclusion of all divine communications. Why should not human nature be as sagacious, and make as many discoveries, civil and religious, at the *Cape of Good Hope*, or in *America*; as in *Egypt*, *Palaestine*, *Mesopotamia*, *Greece*, or *Rome*? Nay, why should *Palaestine* so far exceed them all, as it did confessedly? Allow the scripture-accounts, and all will be clear and easy. Mankind after the flood, were first dispersed from the plains of *Mesopotamia*. Some of the chief heads of families settled there, in *Palaestine*, and in *Egypt*. *Palaestine* had afterwards extraordinary divine illuminations bestowed upon its inhabitants, the *Israelites* and *Jews*. Hence its inhabitants had the purest notions of God, and the wisest civil establishment. Next after them come the *Egyptians*, and *Chaldeans*: who, not being removed from their first habitations, and living in fertile countries watered by the *Nile*, *Tigris*, and *Euphrates*, may be supposed to have preserved more both of the antediluvian and postdiluvian revelations; also to have had more leisure for invention, and more free communication with the *Israelites* and *Jews*; than any other nations. Whereas those small parties which were driven farther and farther from each other into the extremities of heat and cold, intirely occupied in providing necessaries for themselves, and also cut off by rivers, mountains,

pretty near the same slow, regular steps it does at present.

Since we have looked into past times more narrowly, we prove the ancients to have been far less expert and knowing, than by a superstitious reverence for every thing remote, we once were accustomed to suppose : and as well from the present state of those particular nations, which used to brag most of their extraordinary advancement, and long possession of the sciences ; as from the remaining specimens of the skill in their forefathers, when fairly (y) represented, we find

mountains, or distance, from all communication with *Palestine*, *Egypt*, and *Chaldaea* ; would lose much of their original stock, and have neither inclination nor ability to invent more.' Comp. *Bryant. Anal. pass.* Of the several Arts, Customs, religious rites and civil institutions which first arose in *Asia*, See Conclusion of *Mod. Hist. p. 120. Fol.* Any one that fairly examines history, will find those accounts more probable, than that extraordinary supposition of Ld. *Bolingbroke*, viz. that science may have come originally from west to east. Ld. *B's Works*, Vol. IV. p.

^{14.}

(y) It may indeed be imagined, from the great extent of some ancient cities, such as *Thebes*, *Nineveh*, *Babylon* ; as well as from the enormous size of several public works in those parts, that the ancient nations were much more populous, and that arts have once been in much greater perfection, than they now appear in the world ; but upon second thoughts, I fancy it will be found, that this was rather owing to an unnatural, gigantic taste, which then prevailed (as *Winder observes. Hist. of Know. Vol. II. p. 334.*) in their architecture, statuary, and other arts ; as well as in their frame of government, and politics ; than to any real improvement in either of these respects ; as may be gathered from the vast numbers of men usually employed on each occasion ; which is a sign, that instruments of expedition and convenience were not had in the former case, ib. p. 321 ; and that the means of living comfortably at home, were no less wanting in the latter ; which might be the occasion of so many serving abroad in wars, and made the ancient armies so very numerous as they are commonly

find no great reason to envy them their best acquirements; so far I mean, as concerns real use: for all the worth that fashion and fancy may give things, is out of the question*.

Some of them indeed describe their knowledge in high strains; and perhaps for their times, and in comparison with some of their neighbours, it may have been considerable; and yet 'tis more than probable, that such accounts are chiefly owing to their ignorance of the true state of the rest of mankind; as is the case remarkably with the *Chinese*, a people so much celebrated by themselves, and their implicit followers; who yet, upon more strict examination, have appeared in most things of consequence, and where most might have been expected from them, least of all to deserve a character: so that nothing

but

represented, ib. p. 323. This notion is confirmed, from observing the like monstrous undertakings carried on entirely by the labour of multitudes, in countries where there could be no room for our suspecting any extraordinary skill, viz. *Mexico* and *China*. See *Hume*, Polit. Disc. D. x. Though what the author of a *Dissertation on the Numbers of Mankind*, [Edin. 1753.] has adduced to the contrary, well deserves farther consideration. Comp. *Mod. U. Hist.* fol. Vol. III. p. 644. not. r. c. On the supposed populousness of those northern nations which over-ran the Roman empire, see *Geddes*, Misc. Tracts, Vol. III. No. 6. p. 13. *Robertson* Hist. Ch. V. p. 4. *Mallet's Northern Antiquities*, V. 1. C. ix.

* Why the sciences of men's brains have been more subject to vicissitudes, than the arts of their hands, see *Sprat*, Hist. R. S. p. 118, &c. 3d Ed. 'The operations of the Intellect are more fixed and uniform than those of the Fancy or Taste. Truth makes an impression nearly the same in every place; whereas the ideas of what is beautiful, elegant or sublime, vary in different Climates.' *Robertson*. Hist. of Ch. V. p. 322.

P

but their as small acquaintance with the *Europeans* formerly, as ours with them, could possibly give rise to those extravagant sentiments and sayings, that are recorded of each other (z).

The

(z) See the 1st Part, p. 29, note (+); to which may be added *Jenkin's Reasonableness*, Vol. I. p. 340, &c. *Wotton's and Baker's Reflections*, under the heads *physic* and *astronomy*. These and many other authors shew us, how little able the *Chinese* were to make any proper observations in their so much boasted science of the heavens, till they were shewn the way by missionaries: as also how monstrously inaccurate both their chronological and astronomical tables were found to be. See *Coffard's Letter* in *Phil. Transf.* for 1747. *Du Halde*, their panegyrist, says, They have applied themselves from the beginning of their empire to *astronomy*; yet when he comes to explain himself, all their proficiency appears to be a little, low, judicial *astrology*, Vol. I. fol. Eng. p. 394. So ignorant were they in *geography*, that their literati seeing a map of the world in the hands of the *Jesuits*, took one of the two hemispheres, which contained *Europe*, *Asia*, and *Africa*, for the empire of *China*, p. 280. [Comp. *Travels of Jesuits*, Vol. II. p. 304.] Some of their curious notions in *religion* may be seen, p. 254. 652. 655. 657. Their skill in *metaphysics* has been touched upon by *Gurdon*, B. Lect. sect. 14. p. 425, &c. Their *mechanics* may be judged of, from the *Jesuit's* account of their taking the first watch he brought thither for a living creature. *Boyle* on final causes, p. 230. Their civil *policy*, from the appointment of an officer in *Peking*, and other large cities, to destroy every morning all the Infants exposed in the streets; which amounted to a very considerable number. *Mod. Un. Hist.* fol. Vol. I. p. 175. Their method of communicating any science, from their yet being without an *alphabet*. See *Phil. Transf.* Vol. LIX. p. 495. Some specimens of their *moral*s may be seen in *Anson's Voyage*, p. 398. 400. or *Leland, Advantage*, &c. Vol. II. Part ii. c. 4. Of their *government*, *Anson* B. iii. c. 10. Of the bribery and corruption which reign through their whole Empire, from the highest tribunals down to the lowest offices, *Mod. Un. Hist.* fol. Vol. III. p. 578. 'Upon the whole, the *Chinese* appear to be little better than a nation of fig-
nal hypocrites, who boast of the equity and excellence of their laws, and stick at no violation of them; and under the fairest outside, and pretence of justice and probity, indulge themselves in all manner of extortions, fraud, and villainy.' ib. p. 581. add Conclusion

The same may in great measure be affirmed of the Egyptian learning ||. Though this country has been

stiled

Conclusion of Mod. Hist. p. 100. fol. or Torreen's short account of their reigning Vice, O'beck Voyage, Vol. II. p. 238, &c. So far are they from being qualified to teach the Europeans morality! That most of those of learning and quality among them border upon Atheism. ib. vol. IV. B. xviii. c. 7. sect. 14. not. G. Comp. Mons. Barbinais's Letters, ib. c. 9, sect. 11. note P. An attempt was lately made [but the foundation of it has been questioned. Vid. Montague against Needham, and Phil. Transf. Vol. LIX. No. LXVI.] to shew that many of their ancient characters are the very same with those of the Egyptians, with whom they must once have had a considerable communication, and from whom they probably derived most of their science, together with many of their customs and religious institutes; which would prove an effectual confutation of the pretended antiquity and authenticity of their famed annals. Vid. Needham, Epist. de Inscriptione Aegyptiaca. Rome, 1761. & Reponse aux deux Lettres de Monsieur Bartoli. The same observation was made long ago by M. Martinus, Hist. Sin. L. i. p. 23. A. D. 1659. Comp. Huet. Hist. of Commerce, c. 10. and Goguet, on their History and Chronology, Vol. III. Diff. iii. p. 284, &c. with the curious Extracts from their Historians. ib. p. 300. 308.* Guignes de l'Origin des Chinois: and the Letters of M. de Mairan with some judicious Remarks on them in Gent. Mag. March 1766. add Sharp Prolegom. ad Opusc. T. Hyde p. 14. &c. and Mod. Un. Hist. fol. Vol. XVI. c. 9. p. 95. or Laughton, Hist. of Anc. Egypt. Introd. p. 20.

|| 'The truth is, there want not grounds of suspicion, that the old Egyptian learning was not of that elevation, which the present distance of our age makes us apt to think it was; and a learned man hath, in a set discourse, endeavoured to shew the great defects that there were in it *. Neither can it, I think, be denied, but, according to the reports we have now concerning it, some parts of their learning were frivolous, a great deal magical, and the rest short of that improvement which the accession of the parts and industry of after-ages gave unto it.' Stillingfleet, Or. S. B. ii. c. 2. p. 75. add Wotton, Refl. c. 9. Sir T. P. Blount's Ess. iii. p. 153, &c. Vitringa Com. in Jes. Vol. I. p. 540, &c. Wood's Essay on Homer p. 117, &c.

* Conring. de Herm. Med. c. 10, 11, 12.

styled the Mother of Arts*, as well as Mistress of Religion†; and was, no doubt, as early polished as most countries: yet if we be allowed to judge of her improvement in other parts of science, from that most concerning one, and that which in all reason should have been most cultivated, I mean *medicine*; of which she also claims the first invention ‡; we shall not have much room to admire her high advances.—‘ It must evidently appear, says a learned writer, that the *Egyptians* could have no such physicians in the days of *Moses*, as *Diodorus* and *Herodotus* seem to suppose: it is much more probable that ages after these times, they were, like the *Babylonians*, entirely destitute of persons skillful in curing any diseases that might happen amongst them; and that the best method they could think of, after consulting their oracles, was, when any one was sick, they took care to have as many persons see and speak to him as possibly could; that if any one who saw the sick person, had had the like distemper, he might say, what was proper to be done in that condition.’ From which single instance

* *Macrob.* Sat. L. i. c. 15, Comp. note (x) supra. p. 208.

† *Id.* L. vii. c. 13. et *Annian.* *Marc.* L. xxii. *Herod.* *Euterp.*

‡ *Plin.* N. H. L. vii. c. 56.

|| *Shuckford,* Connect. B. ix. p. 367. *Babylonii* (teste *Herodot.* L. i. et *Strab.* G. L. xvi.) languentes in forum efferebant, ut viri qui eos adirent, consulerent hortarenturque ad ea quæ ipsi faciendo effugissent similem morbum, aut alium novissent effugisse.—*Idem* factitabant *Lusitani* et *Egyptii*. *P. Verg.* De Inv. Rer. L. i. c. 20. Conf. *Strab.* G. L. iii. et *Plutarch.* de Occult. vivend. That the same was done in other countries, see *Harle*, H. Essay on the State of Phys. in the O. T. p. 4. ‘ The *Egyptians*

stance of the state of this most necessary art, in those times and places; as well as its first rudiments, in like manner described by an able judge; we may,
I think

Egyptian practice of physic depended much on astrological and magical grounds, either the influence of some particular planet, or some tutelar dæmon were still considered; [Wotton, p. 119.] which precarious foundation must needs depreciate their skill, and stop any increase of knowledge which might be made on other principles.' *Un. Hist.* Vol. I. p. 219. Αιγυπτίοις λεγόσ ὅτι αρχα τοις αἰγυπτίοις τα σάρκα ήται και τριάκοντα διαιλύθοτις δάμνονται, η θεοὶ τηνες μέσοις, εἰς τοσαύτη μέρα νομιμωσον—αλλος αλλο τι αὐτας πάντα ιστιτασται—και δη επικαλυπτεις αυτος μάντας των μέρων τα παθηματα. *Cels. ap. Orig.* L. viii. p. 416. Ed. Cant. Nor was the method which they are said to have taken of establishing its rules by law [Diod. Sic. L. i. p. 74. Shuckford, B. ix. p. 362. Chandler, Vind. of O. T. Part ii. p. 442. Goguet, Vol. II. 247.] like to make any great progress in that science. That surgery was by much the oldest branch of *physic*, and that this art in general made but very slow advances, till, after some ages spent in collecting observations, it came to the height of reputation under *Hippocrates*: [where it stood many ages more, and where, as a science, some say it stands yet] see *Drake's Notes to Le Clerc, Hist. Phys.* Part i. B. i. c. 17, &c. What progress could be made in *anatomy* during the ancient superstition of the *Egyptians*, may be seen *Diod. Sic.* L. i. In embalming, the body was opened with much ceremony; the person who performed it, fled as soon as he had done his office, and all who were present pursued him with stones, as one who had incurred the public malediction. For the *Egyptians* regarded with horror every one who offered any violence to a human body. *Goguet*, Part i. B. iii. c. 1. Art. ii. The same superstition prevails among the *Chinese*. See *Lett. Edif.* T. xvii. p. 389. T. xxi. p. 147, &c. T. xxvi. p. 26.

A tolerable account of the ancient state of *physic*, may be seen in a note to p. 85. of *Young's Hist. Diff.* Vol. II. Add *Harle's Ess.* p. 80, &c. or *Barchusen de Medicinæ Orig. et Progr. Dissert.* i. et xviii. or *D. Le Clerc, Hist. Phys.* passim.

† *Celsus* inventionem artis scienter ponit, L. i. scribens.—Notarunt ægrorum qui sine medicis erant, alios propter aviditatem primis diebus cibum protinus sumpsiisse, alios propter fastidium abstinuisse; et levatum magis morbum eorum qui abstinuerint: itemque alios in ipsa febre aliquid edisse, alios paulo ante

cam,

I think, be satisfied in what condition the rest then were; in other parts of the world; as also of their improvement since in all respects *.

Many

eam, alios post remissionem ejus; et optime iis cessisse qui post finem febris id fecissent.—Hæc similiaque cum quotidie incidenter, diligentes homines talia animadvertentes ad extreum percepserunt quæ ægrotantibus utilia forent. Sic Medicinam ortam inter omnes conitat.' *C. Cels. ap. Pol. Verg. de R. I. L. i. c. 20.* Comp. *Quintil. L. ii. c. 18.* Add *Wotton, Refl. c. 26. p. 341, &c. 2d. Ed. Max. Tyr. Diff. xl. 234. Barchusen, Diff. i. iii. p. 11, &c.*

' How simple the beginnings of this art were, may be observed by the story or tradition of *Aesculapius* going about the country with a dog and a she-goat always following him; both which he used much in his cures; the first for licking all ulcerated wounds; and goat's milk for diseases of the stomach and lungs. We find little more recorded of either his methods or medicines; though he was so successful by his skill, or so admired for the novelty of his profession, as to have been honoured with statues, esteemed son of *Apollo*, and worshipped as a god.' *Temple's Works, Vol. I. p. 280.* This observation seems to come with some weight from so professed an admirer of all that relates to the *ancients*. To which we may add, that the very notion of a *god of physic*, with his several temples and their apparatus, will demonstrate the low state in which that art must then be; since his priests and practitioners, who were to keep up his credit by performing now and then something extraordinary, if they could have done many real cures, would never have needed to recur to so much superstition, artifice, and jugglery, as was practised all along, while such a notion subsisted. *Vid. Le Clerc on Aesculapius, Hill. Ph. c. 28, &c. of the ancient anatomy, ib. 104, 125. of chemistry, p. 146.*

* See *Nicholl's Conf.* Part i. p. 81, 82. 1st Ed. or *Goguet de L'Origine des Loix, des Arts, &c. Paris, 1758. Edinburgh, 1761.* Part i. B. iii. and Part ii. B. iii. c. 2. Art. i. ' We may observe, that the progress of the arts and sciences in the first ages, was exceeding slow, even among those nations who pursued them with the greatest constancy, and keenness. The tedious imperfect methods they had of communicating their thoughts, must have formed a very great obstacle to the improvement of human knowledge. For many ages mankind knew no better ways of writing, than painting and hieroglyphics. Both these ways of writing are extremely defective: They are capable only of representing

Many are indeed carried on much faster in some places than in others ; and some now and then are brought to so great perfection in one country, as to seem almost incapable of any increase, for several ages ; which proves against an exact, equable improvement under each period, and in each particular ; which never was contended for : but is no argument against improvement in general ; much less, any evidence that these attainments grow daily worse : and notwithstanding this, or any other limitations, which might be admitted ; yet from some of the great outlines of nature ; from plain appearances, in many remarkable æras, and most considerable events ; we

seem

presenting sensible objects : Symbols are quite unfit for communicating, with precision, abstract ideas. For which reason, mathematics in particular could make but little progress, till after the invention of alphabetical writing. This invention has, no doubt, contributed infinitely to the perfection and progress of the sciences. Yet at first, its utility must have been inconsiderable. It is only by communicating their ideas, that men can improve their discoveries. But the mere invention of letters was not sufficient for this purpose. They wanted some kind of matter, flexible and easily transported, on which they might write long discourses with ease and expedition : This was not discovered till long after. Marble, stone, brick, metals, wood, &c. were at first used for writing, or rather engraving upon. When so much time was necessary to write a few sentences, it could not be expected that the sciences should make a very rapid progress. Besides, these kinds of books could not be transported from place to place, but with great difficulty. Accordingly we find, that the sciences remained in a state of great imperfection among all the ancient nations.—Human knowledge has made greater progress within these last hundred years, than in all antiquity ; which is chiefly owing to the expeditious and easy methods we have of communicating and publishing all our discoveries.' ib. c. 2. Art. vi. p. 275. Comp. Sketches of the Hist. of Man, v. 1. B. 1. f. 5.

seem to have still ground sufficient to conclude, that on the whole they are, and always have been, in the main, *progressive*.

Now this progress in *arts*, will necessarily bring with it a proportionable improvement of the other natural advantages ; such as health, strength, plenty, and politeness : each of these tend, in some respect or other, to polish and adorn the face of nature, and lead us to apply its laws to our respective uses, much more effectually, than could be obtained without them. By these we are enabled to reap its several benefits, in ways more easy and compendious ; with less time, labour, and expence : the world is stocked more plentifully with inhabitants ; and each of them supported in a way more elegant, and advantageous to itself, and all around it. In short, every thing in life becomes more comfortable, and commodious ; and life itself may be said to attain a longer date, by means of both a better, and more early education*. That this has been the case in later ages,

* * There is a sense in which these latter generations in general have the advantage of the ancients, and in which they may be said to out-live them—viz. in that they live more in less time. It is a common observation, that children ripen and become men sooner in these latter ages, than formerly they did.—Notwithstanding our prejudices in other respects, we esteem so well of ourselves in this, that we think we are more knowing in every science and profession of life, and more capable of business than our ancestors, not far backwards, were at double our age. And in confirmation hereof, some traces in Scripture may be observed, whereby it appears, that the state of the childhood continued much longer in the infancy of the world, than at present ; and seemed to bear proportion to the greater length of men's

ages, seem too clear to be denied by any person, who will be at the least trouble to compare them with the most extravagant account of the precedent. 'Tis no great compliment to the present times to say, we are improved in every manual art, as well

men's lives. And the same is observed by heathen authors. *Worth.* Ess. p. 422, 423. 'In other classes of animals, the individual advances from infancy to age or maturity; and he attains, in the compass of a single life, to all the perfections his nature can reach; but in the human kind, the species has a progress as well as the individual; they build in every subsequent age on foundations formerly laid; and in a succession of years tend to a perfection in the application of their faculties, to which the aid of long experience is required, and to which many generations must have combined their endeavours.' *Ferguson,* Ess. on the Hist. of Civil Soc. p. 7.

'When nations succeed one another in the career of inquiries and discoveries, the last is always the most knowing. Systems of science are gradually formed. The globe itself is traversed by degrees, and the history of every age when past is an accession of knowledge to those who succeed. The *Romans* were more knowing than the *Greeks*; and every scholar of modern Europe is, in this sense, more learned than the most accomplished person that ever bore either of those celebrated names.' ib. p. 44.

† — 'When men began to unite into societies, to cloath themselves, and build cottages, and apply themselves to agriculture; the persons who fell upon the first hints of these rude contrivances, were esteemed such mighty benefactors to mankind, that they could never sufficiently express their gratitude to them. Hence they were made immortal, and divine honours were paid to them; and hence it is well known arose the godship of *Jupiter*, *Bacchus*, *Minerva*, *Ceres*, and the rest of that tribe of deities: but there is not a plough-boy now, that would not have been a god, even to *Jupiter* himself; had he lived in his days, with present skill in husbandry.' 'Had the mystery of printing been invented in ancient times, *Guttenberg* of *Mentz* might have been a god of higher esteem throughout *Germany*, than *Mercury* or *Jupiter* himself.' [Worth. Ess. p. 160.] Which we cannot think improbable, since his assistant *Fust* or *Faust*, attained the title of conjurer for it, in so late times, and such a place as *Paris*.

well as those of government (*), the social ones, and even

(*) The modern governments, at least in *Europe*, are better calculated for the general good of the governed, which is now known to be the only end of government; than the ancient ones. The world being divided into smaller kingdoms and states, these become checks upon each other, and by their mutual vigilance, the mischievous designs of each aspiring Prince is with more ease and safety curbed or punished. [That all great empires degrade and debase the human species, v. Robertson, Hist. Ch. V. p. 3, &c.] The balance of Power is kept up amongst them in general, as well as in most of the separate constitutions, by a due mixture of liberty, the grand preservative of public spirit, and best excitement to each private virtue. That horrid spirit of heroism, and desire of conquest, seems to be pretty well extinguished! those deadly feuds, and desolating factions, are in a great measure abated: and 'if at present there are fewer revolutions in *Christendom*, 'tis, because the principles of sound morality are more universally known; men are less savage and fierce, and their understanding is better cultivated; and perhaps all this is owing to men of learning, who have polished *Europe*.' Exam. of *Machiavel's Prince*, p. 18, 19. 'We begin to be cured of *Machiavelism*, and recover from it every day. More moderation is become necessary in the councils of princes. What would formerly have been called a master-stroke in politics, would be now, independent of the horror it might occasion, the greatest imprudence. Happy is it for men that they are in a situation, in which, though their passions prompt them to be wicked, it is however for their interest to be humane and virtuous.' *Montesquieu, Spirit of Laws*, B. xxi. c. 16. Add *Worthington's observations* on this subject, Ess. c. 8 p. 173, &c. *Ferguson* Ess. p. 201. and *Hume, Pol. Disc.* xxi. who makes it appear, that human nature in general enjoys more liberty at present, in the most arbitrary government of Europe, than it ever did during the most flourishing period of ancient times. See also his Hist. of Eng. Vol. II. which gives sufficient ground for the following observation. 'Those who, from a pretended respect to antiquity, appeal at every turn to an original plan of the constitution; only cover their turbulent spirit, and their private ambition, under the appearance of venerable forms; and whatever period they pitch on for their model, they may still be carried back to a more ancient period, where they will find the measures of power entirely different; and where every circumstance, by reason of the greater barbarity of the times, will appear still less worthy of imitation. Above all, a civilized nation, like the *English*, who have

even our very amusements*: the thing shews itself every where; and 'tis no less plain *a priori*, that it must be so. If, as the *Psalmist* says†, *One day telleth another, and one night certifieth another*; if, according to the Prophet‡, *many run to and fro*, (travel by sea and land) and thereby *knowledge is increased*; if by repeated observation, and experience; by frequent intercourse and extensive commerce, the world grow (as it does unavoidably) in any respect more perfect; this will, by that affinity, and union, long since

have happily established the most perfect and most accurate system of liberty, that ever was found compatible with government; ought to be cautious of appealing to the practice of their ancestors, or regarding the maxims of uncultivated ages, as certain rules for their present conduct.' ib. c. 23. fin. Comp. Various Prospects of Mankind, &c. p. 94 *. Goguet on the imperfection of ancient Governments, Vol. II: B. vi. fin. and Bp. Elly, on that of our own. Tracts on Liberty, Pt. ii. or King's Essay on the Eng. Constitution, p. 3, &c. where a just account is given of the several constitutions now in Europe.

* See Worth. Eff. p. 210. or Priestley Pref. to Hist. of Electr. p. 18, &c. Whether we of this nation are arrived at the just standard of elegance, or have exceeded it; may be learnt from the description of each state, in the Appendix to a Dissertation on the Numbers of Mankind in Ancient and Modern Times, p. 329, &c. I shall add one part of it in illustration of the words above. ' If elegance comes short of the just standard, and is not yet arrived at its proper maturity; human life must necessarily be deprived of the enjoyment of many conveniences of which it is capable, and the manners of mankind must incline towards fierceness and superstition. If carried no farther than the just limit, it produces a more commodious method of living, gives rise to the invention of many new refinements, heightens the splendor and magnificence of society, tends to render mankind social and humane, begets mildness and moderation in the tempers and actions of men, and helps to banish ignorance and superstition out of the world; and thus far it contributes to the perfection of human society.'

† Psal. xix. 2

‡ Dan. xii. 4.

since observed between the parts of science ||, derive perfection on each sister art.

This effect will, in a good measure, follow, if the world be but supposed to continue in the same natural state in which it was created, and the genius of mankind keep where it was originally; nay, this must be the case, if both do not grow worse and worse; and in a very great degree; much greater than has ever been pretended. But as the point before us can be no longer called in question, than till the matter is duly stated; we have not so much occasion to give a direct proof of it, by descending to particulars, (which indeed would be infinite, and most of which appear too obvious to need naming) [c], as to point out,

¶ *Omnis artes quae ad humanitatem pertinent, habent quoddam commune vinculum, et quasi cognatione quadam inter se continentur.* Cic. pro Arch. Poet. Id. de Orat. l. 3. Est illa *Platonis* vera—vox, omnem doctrinam harum ingenuarum et humanarum artium uno quoddam societatis vinculo contingere. It would be mere impertinence to bring instances in proof of this. A strong confirmation of it may be seen in *Priestley's Hist. of Electr.* P. iv. sect. 3. p. 500, &c.

(c) The reader may see a list of them in *Pancirollus, de Nov. Repert.* or *Almechten's Inventa Nov.-Antiqua*, as also in *Edwards, Glanvill, Wotton, Sir T. P. Blount, Perault, Gedyn, Spratt, Hist. R. S.* and others, who have appeared for the moderns, as I apprehended, with superior advantage, in the late controversy on this subject. A more minute detail of each improvement, and its gradual progress in the world, may be seen in *Goguet's Treatise on the origin of Laws, Arts, and Sciences, and their progress among the most ancient nations*; or in *Priestley's Hist. of Philosophy*, particularly under the present state of *Vision*, period i. * It cannot be denied, but that the reading of ancient authors is very useful to us; but, if it were possible that we should be as ancient as they are, and that they should be in our place, and read

out, what is more material, and perhaps less taken notice of, the farther connection which this progress of arts has with our religious knowledge, of each kind.

By religion in general, I mean the way of promoting our most perfect happiness upon the whole, together with that of others, in this life; as well as qualifying us for, and by particularly recommending ourselves to the divine favour, entitling us to higher degrees of it in the next. Now the knowledge of this, whether natural or revealed, will appear to have held pace in general with all other knowledge, from the beginning; and these three branches of science seem to have been, in the main, similar and synchronous; as indeed they ought to be, or else perpetual

disap-

read our writings as we read theirs; would they get no benefit by it? they would without doubt learn more from our works, than we can from theirs.' *Le Clerc. Parrhasiana*, c. 4. p. 179. To which may be added, the just observation of *Bayle*, 'That if these Authors were to come back to the world, they would see that many things were supposed to be contained in their books, which they never dreamt of.'

After an enumeration of particulars, *Ray* determines that the writers of antiquity excel us chiefly in those arts which are concerned in polishing their language. *Philosoph. Lett.* between *Ray* and his correspondents, p. 241. Whether the ancients or moderns were in general the greater *Geniuses*, seems to be a point as difficult and unnecessary to determine, as it is foreign to our present inquiry. I shall only observe here, that if the latter have much greater helps and advantages in some respects, which may appear to set them below the former in this article; yet there are others, in which they have no less disadvantage, particularly this of *Language*; since we are under a necessity of learning many languages, before we can come at that stock of knowledge which lies locked up in them; whereas they seldom wanted above one.

disappointment, and confusion would ensue ; as was in part observed before *.

The first race of men had so much knowledge imparted to them, most probably by God himself, as they could either then want, or well be capable of ; so much as they had either means or leisure to employ ; and higher notices, could they have been attended to, would, we conceive, rather have disturbed, and rendered them uneasy in their then situation ; and tended to disqualify them for their more immediate occupations, in that part of life. They were placed in a world capable of affording all gratifications suited to their mortal frame, and made for its support ; and were designed to glorify their Maker's goodness in the free enjoyment of them for some time here ; as well as to expect a reparation of its decays, with farther and more full manifestations of the same goodness, somewhere else hereafter. Their first employ then, was, to learn the present use, and application of these natural benefits themselves, as well as to lay a foundation for communicating them to future generations ; which were to inhabit the same place, for many ages. And accordingly, their notions of the world, and of its Governor, and consequent opinions in religion, both natural and positive ; were such as might be expected from men in such circumstances†. As to the latter, and more especially that

great

* Part i. p. 8, 9, 10.

† What these opinions might be, is at large described by Winder, Hist. of Knowl. Vol. I. c. 2. sect. 2. though whether

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great article of it which concerned the restauration of human nature ; they had only a general, indeterminate expectation of some redeemer, who was to arise among them* : which yet was very sufficient to keep up their hopes, and secure a trust in and dependence on their Creator ; especially when revived by so many fresh earnests of present, temporal blessings : but when, or where, or upon what plan, that redemption was to be worked, they knew not ; and perhaps it might be as unnecessary to impart this fully to them, as it was probably above their comprehension. To preserve an intercourse with the Divine Being, it is likewise probable that they had positive directions about consecrating to him some part of their goods, together with the times, and places for presenting this before him ; by way of acknowledgment of his present bounty, and application for the continuance of it ; and also in deprecation of his displeasure, whenever they became sensible of having incurred it by abusing that bounty ; and lastly, as a settled, stated means of always having access to him, and finding acceptance with him. Hence was the origin of *sacrifices* †, as they are distinguished into *expiatory*, *euclical*, and *eucharistical* ; and this seems

to

our first parents thought so clearly on the subject, as this author, and those celebrated moderns he there mentions, [p. 36.] I much question.

* See Bp. Sherlock, Use and Intent of Proph. sect. 2. or Winder, Hist. of Knowl. p. 26, 27.

† See Part ii. p. 53. note i. and p. 55, 56. notes k, and l. with Winder on the subject, p. 30.

to have been the substance of the primitive religion ; which was as plain, and simple as the times.

When the notions of mankind grew more complex, religion by degrees became so too ; and spread itself, together with their other notices ; all which were in some measure supplemental, and subsidiary to it. Each new degree of knowledge, in any part of nature, was a new opening of the human mind ; still more and more displaying the Divine Wisdom and goodness, in the original constitution of things, and the construction of animals ; as well as in the constant, regular preservation of each species, and pointing out their various ends and uses ; thereby enabling man, to whom they were all subjected, to enter farther into this constitution himself ; as well by receiving the benefits thereof more perfectly, as by resembling his Creator in distributing the same more copiously ; and both ways, paying his most acceptable tribute of duty, and devotion to the common Parent.

When the lives of men began to shorten, we find arts increasing much faster in proportion ; as it was fit they should ; since otherwise, many valuable discoveries would drop before they could be brought to any tolerable perfection, or applied to common use ; there being then no other repository for such, beside the memory of their inventors : till at length came the art of alphabetical writing, which drew along with it all the rest ; helping at once to spread, and

and to perpetuate them. And it is worth observing, as was just hinted before*, that about the same time, more frequent, and more full revelations were communicated to the world ; which thereby became better qualified to receive, preserve, and convey them ; as they were likewise dispensed in a way best suited to its own state ; and which most effectually supplied its wants, and tended to give greater light and improvement both to it, and one another : as is shewn particularly in Part II.

We have seen in some measure, how the case stood both with religion and science, in the *antediluvian* and *patriarchal* ages ; and are sufficiently acquainted with those alterations it received under the *Israelites*, and *Jews*; by various additional institutes, and a succession of prophets : not very unlike to which, was a light held forth to the east, by their great oracles, *Zoroaster*, and *Confucius* ; and to most parts of the west, by a long series of their philosophers ; as is observed in the same place †.

To

* Part ii. p. 153. add *Winder*, Hist. of K. p. 221, 222.
† A discovery of this kind [an Alphabetic Character] at the period when Providence thought proper to contract the term of human life within the narrow boundary of seventy years, became necessary to advance the progress of science, as well as to enlighten and prepare mens minds once more for the reception of revealed truths, which had been so generally perverted [by that idolatry whereof symbolical writing was the great source] in order to prevent such a perversion of it for the future.' Conject. Observ. on Alphabetic Writing, 1772.

† Ibid. p. 127.

To these, in its proper season, succeeds *Christianity*; which surpassed them all, as much as the times of its promulgation were superior, in all kinds of knowledge, to the past; and which was evidently as great an improvement upon *natural religion*, properly so called, as it was upon any of the former dispensations; and might, with just the same propriety, be termed a bare revival, or *republication* of the one, as of the other. Though perhaps there may be some room to doubt, whether even those ages, enlightened as they were above the former, were capable of receiving all the improvement which it was fitted and designed to give;—whether the world was yet able to admit it, in its utmost purity and perfection. On the contrary, there seem to have been so many dregs left of *Jewish* superstition, and *Gentile* philosophy, as required a long time to purge them away: and from one of which it had no sooner got well clear, than it became immersed, and clouded in the other†. Even in its early days, we find it loaded with the refuse of each crabbed system; which was brought in to explain mysteries, or rather make them, in the gospel: till by degrees, itself is made a matter of high speculation, and refinement; and such nice disputes‡ raised about the natures of its author, and the abstract nature, or separate subsistence of the human soul; as served,

† Part ii. p. 168.

‡ See Constantine's excellent letter on this subject in *Euseb.* de Vit. *Conf.* c. 66. 67, &c. add *Bower's Hist. of the Popes*, Vol. II. *passim*. Or *Priestly Hist. of Corruption*, v. 1. p. 1.

served, one of them to fill the eastern church with blood and desolation, and at length subject it to the *Mahometan* yoke ; for which alone it seemed at that time fitted * ; the other to introduce the doctrine of *purgatory*, and with it a long train of *popish* errors ; which ended in a western tyranny, over both soul and body †.

Both these facts have indeed a long while oppressed the *Christian* world ; and if they be altogether so bad as we have been used to esteem them, the large spread and long continuance of them is not at present easily accounted for : but we hope, they may be found really not such § ; and that the same wise and good ends will appear to be accomplished by them,

* Part ii. p. 179. note n.

† Some explanation of the latter of these two grand articles has been hazarded in the following Discourse on *Death*, with the *Appendix* ; the former must be reserved till the times will bear a more impartial enquiry than they seem capable of admitting at present, while so much prejudice and so many penal laws surround it.

§ ‘ Popery itself (says *Worthington*, Ess. p. 156.) begins to be ashamed of some of its gruffer errors ; and its divines of late have been forced to explain them in a manner more agreeable to truth and scripture.’ [And the same thing may be observed of the *Mahometan* doctors in their comments upon the *Koran*, as appears remarkably all through *Sale’s notes*.] ‘ Moreover, that persecuting spirit, which was the reproach and scandal of *Christians*, is, God be praised, in a good measure abated among all sorts and denominations of them ; and we do not now hear so much of *Christians* being burnt and tortured by *Christians*. Nor do *Papists* at present seem to thirst so much after *Protestant* blood. — It is observed likewise, that there is not that ignorance and immorality to be objected against the *Papists* now, as formerly ; learning being no less propagated among them, than *Protestants* :

many

in due time, as have been evident in most other dispensations*.

However, at the next great æra, which is justly styled the *Reformation*, there appeared sufficient tokens of this progress in general knowledge, and these succeeding so fast one upon another, that they cannot escape the slightest observation †. Here the above-mentioned branches of it are again united, and affording mutual assistance, and support to each other. Science of all kinds, human and divine, revives; and with it come new methods of communication; (or rather it rises as much above the past, as these exceeded all before them;) and has been since continuing to improve, and to draw with it all collateral advantages, down to the present times.

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many good and pious books are published by their clergy; nor are they so very scandalous in their lives, as in the ages preceding the Reformation; but they in general are exemplary in their behaviour, and afford us patterns in some things which we might profit by.' The like has been observed of the *Mahometans* above.

Concerning the influence that improvements in science will have on the state and progress of reformation in religion, see *Mosheim's Eccl. Hist.* by *Macklaine*, 8vo. Vol. V. App. 2. p. 104, &c.

* Of which more may be seen in part ii. p. 182, and 188, in notes.

† See some of the particulars in Part ii. p. 190. and *Worthington's* account of the progress of learning after its revival, *Ecc. p. 200, &c.* To which we may add, that the avenues to learning of all kinds have been planned out and opened by *Ld. Bacon*; the nature and most intimate recesses of the human mind unfolded and explained by *Locke*; the frame and constitution of the universe by *Newton*; (to name no other writers of our own) in a more perfect manner, than ever was done or attempted, since the foundation of the world. *Eundo per præcipua scientiarum quibus eruditio circulus absolvitur, genera, demonstrare possem docto- rum*

The more we still know of human nature, and become versed in the art of living ; the more enlarged and adequate notions must we have of natural religion ; and thereby be better able to comprehend, and apply revealed* : the more we are acquainted with the faculties of our own *soul*, the better qualified must we be to regulate and improve them ;—to direct the reasoning power, assist the memory, regulate the imagination ; in each of which points very considerable discoveries have been made of late :—the more we know of the *body*, the more able we are to prescribe a regimen, and remedy the several disorders of it : and (though it seems to be the intent of Providence, for reasons obvious enough †, that *physic* in particular, should not receive the same degrees of improvement with some other arts, yet) perhaps it would not be hard to demonstrate, that we are actually able to administer it, in a more perfect manner now than formerly ‡ ; that our observations on the disorders,

rum virorum labore et industria ad istud fastigium deducta ple-
raque, simulque methodo tam concinna tamque perspicue propo-
fita, ut juvenibus hodie eo pervenire facile sit, quorsum olim senibus
vix adspirare licuit. *Buddeus de bonarum literarum decremento*
nosta ræstate non temere metuendo. A. D. 1714.

* Vid. *Walchii Orat. de Incrementis quæ nostra ræstate Stud. Theol. cepit* ; recitat. MDCCXXV.

† Some of the many ill consequences of its being in the power of physicians to prolong the life of a tyrant, oppressor, &c. beyond the common date, may be seen in *Sherlock on Death*, c. 3. sect. 2, 3. and the last Discourse here annexed, p. 36.

‡ ‘ This art is wonderfully simplified of late years, has received great additions, and is improving every day, both in simplicity and efficacy.’ *Hartley*, Vol. II. p. 378.

disorders, and defects in each of these, have multiplied rather than the disorders and defects themselves; excepting such as probably arise, and propagate themselves, from some particular, reigning vices].

The more we know of the world, the more we view its order, beauty, symmetry;—the uniform laws by which it is governed;—the just arrangement, and mutual subservency of all its parts; (and I need not observe how much this kind of learning has of late increased*;) the more we see the goodness and perfection

¶ If some new dislempers have arisen of late, 'tis likely others of an older date have ceased; as is observed by *D. Le Clerc.* ‘Fuerant ergo morbi, nonnullorum siderum instar, orti certo tempore, postea extincti sunt; suntque alii, quos ortos quidem non ita pridem novimus, sed quorum finem nondum videmus.’ *Dissert. de Lepra Mosaica*, p. 9. Several instances occur in *Barchusen, de Medic. Orig. et Prog. Diff. v. sect. 6. Comp. Arnot’s Hist. of Edinburgh*, B. 2. C. 2. p. 238.

* Of this, and the benefit the world receives from it, see *Washington, Ess. p. 94. &c.* ‘And if *natural philosophy* in all its parts, by pursuing this method, shall at length be perfected; the bounds of *moral philosophy* will also be enlarged.’ *Newt. Opt. B. iii.* ‘Since things really differ in themselves, in our use of them, and in our conduct about them; the more we know of nature the more we may improve both our virtue and our power of converting natural objects to the real advantage both of ourselves and others: and since our own actions, and especially our moral habits, have so mighty an influence to raise or to debase us; the more we know ourselves and the wonderful œconomy of our moral frame, the better we shall be enabled to adjust that happy temperament; to maintain that regular subordination of our faculties, appetites, and affections, in which so great a part of our virtue and our happiness consists. Every advance therefore in the observation of nature carries with it a proportionable improvement of the moral science. And not only the bounds of this science are extended, as we enlarge our prospect of the disposition and events of things; but the certainty of it is most satisfactorily evinced, when we discern an uniform and established analogy between their natural constitution, which our senses perceive, and that

perfection of its Architect ; and are more fully satisfied that he designed its several inhabitants for happiness in general ; and must approve of every regular, consistent method which they take to promote it.

Such observations on the present world enable us likewise to argue from it to *another* ; and conclude that this other will most probably go on in the like way ; as consisting of the like inhabitants, and conducted by the same hand. As the present world has generally improved hitherto, we may expect that, for the same reason, it shall continue to do so ; and that the next will likewise be still more and more improving : and by the same rule, perhaps each part and member of it, in its respective order, and proportion ; every distinct *class*, as it rises above others, through all that *scale* of beings which exist together, may preserve the same uniformity in point of *succession* too ; that these may follow upon each other, by a no less regular progress, in a growing happiness, through all eternity : and thus the whole creation be, every way, for ever beautifying in its Maker's eye, and drawing nearer to him by degrees of resemblance ; as is suggested by an elegant writer*.

To these deductions of reason, revelation adds new light, and confirmation ; (as it is in like manner itself illustrated and established by them :) it carries on

and that moral constitution, which religion supposes.' Tunstall's Acad. Part i. p. 84, 85. And that *supernatural* light or knowledge will be increased in the same way, its hinderances being of the very same kind, see Bp. Butler's Analogy, p. 262, &c. 2d Ed.

* Addison's Spectator, No. 111.

and completes the notices of natural religion ; by express declarations of the unlimited goodness of the Creator towards *all* his works ;—by giving *us* in particular, a positive assurance that we shall be disposed of in another state, according to our several qualifications : fixing and ascertaining our hopes of arriving in due time at those blessed *mansions* ; where we shall find room for the free exercise, and full enjoyment of each good moral habit, and intellectual accomplishment which we have acquired here :—furnishing ample motives for our perseverance in this course, and guarding against every deviation from it; especially against that very dangerous attendant on the noblest dispositions, pride, and self-sufficiency :—keeping us in a strict dependence on that God, who is to be both our sure guide thither and our great reward there ; in whose hands we always are, and ought to wish ourselves ; and to whose bounty alone we owe, and should be always sensible that we do owe, *every good and every perfect gift**.

Lastly : The more we trace the ways of Providence in the *moral* world, as also the manner of conducting every *dispensation* of revealed religion ; (and we have every day better means of tracing each of them;) we learn more of the designs, and purposes of each, than those before us could ; and from the manner in which this prospect has already been opened,

* *James i. 17.*

ed, have ground to think it will still more and more enlarge ; and though we are yet far from being able to comprehend the whole plan, (which is not to be wondered at in beings, which so lately sprung from *nothing* ;) yet we do comprehend enough already, to convince us that there is a wise and good one, laid from the beginning, and executed in a regular gradation ; and from thence also may infer, that it will still be farther answering its several ends, and still appearing more and more to do so :—that the *manner* how this is to receive its completion will unfold itself, as we proceed in the study of it ; adding our own observations to those of times past, and *comparing spiritual things with spiritual* ; as we do those of the *natural* world with one another ; whereby we have discovered several of its general laws, unknown to former ages, and probably by them judged undiscoverable : and from some others, just beginning to discover themselves*, find more room daily to believe, that the case will be the same with those who shall come after us.

And thus it may be made appear, that the means of knowledge *natural*, *moral*, and *revealed*, have been imparted, in a much more ample manner than ever, to us, *on whom the ends of the world are come*. Why a more proper application of them does not always follow ; must be accounted for on other principles

* V. Priestley's Hist. of Electricity.

ciples (v). Whether by all these means the world might, and ought to have more true religion, and ed or son of wisdom) and also what has been found

(v) The same grand principle of *human liberty*, which renders it morally impossible for any thing relating to the minds or circumstances of mankind, to remain long in a state of perfect uniformity, as observed above, [Part i. p. 16. note c.] may go a good way towards accounting for that partial and unequal manner of implanting, propagating, and preserving any religious notices among mankind, from the beginning of the world to this day; as well as for their various degrees of either improving under, or neglecting and abusing these, together with all the other gifts of Providence; and thereby making way for farther dispensations in succeeding ages, suitable thereto: and though I am sensible, that what has been advanced with regard to the *suitableness* of every dispensation to the exigencies of the world, so as to effect a *gradual improvement*, in the most general sense; may seem at first sight to require a great many qualifications; from the long reign of idolatry before, and during the *Jewish establishment*; and from the like lamentable state of *Paganism* still; together with that of *Papery* and *Mohammedism*, under the gospel: yet even granting this in its full force; allowing for every general corruption of religion through most of the climes and ages of the world; as well as the particular degeneracy thereof in several parts and periods of the same:—still if we judge of its state, [as we use to form a standard for human nature] not from the very worst and most brutal parts thereof; or from places where it lies under the most unnatural restraints; but rather from the best point of light, in which it may be placed, among the wiser and more sober part of its professors in each sect; and measure its proficiency in some of those nations where common sense has had room to exert itself, and common honesty and ingenuity been suffered to attend it in any degree;—where the free use of the understanding has been once admitted in religious matters;—[and where this is not the case with any people, religion is quite out of the question; being no more concerned in their affairs, than as mere matter of form, or some political machine:]—If we take such a view of religion, and put the best sense on each article which it seems capable of, and which the ablest of its advocates have advanced in its defence;—[without which, we are only going to delude ourselves;]—If we allow their due weight to those different glosses put upon some of its oddest points of doctrine and discipline; its seemingly unaccountable rites and ceremonies;—and to the several specious motives for either tolerating,

sound *morals*, now than formerly ; will scarcely admit

ing, or establishing such, among a people stupid enough to approve them, and hardly capable of relishing better :—if we make our inquiry into the state and progress of religion through the whole known world in this fair and free manner, and take care to set out low enough at first,—much lower, I conceive, than has been commonly imagined ; [I mean, not so much in respect of the divine revelations themselves, as the capacity of mankind for reasoning upon them, and their disposition to apply them ;] if we reflect on the same slow, gradual increase of corruptions, in this and every other point ; and their as slow and gradual remedy ;—if we consider the many difficulties that attend the raising and keeping up a tolerable spirit of liberty and ingenuity in any people for any long time ;—the many dangerous abuses to which liberty itself lies constantly exposed ;—the difficulty of preserving proper care and industry ;—a right sense of, and due attention to, their interests ;—a purity of morals, and integrity of heart ;—or of restoring these in any country where they have once begun to decline ;—if we reflect upon the world's great proneness and propensity to a decline in these respects,—together with the causes of all this ;—we shall not, I believe, be much surprised at the same thing happening in religion ; or imagine its course to be either unconformable to, or altogether unconnected with, that of all *common things* about us. Again, as its evident connection with some of the particulars above mentioned must oblige us to allow of frequent lets, and long retrogradations, in the course of religious knowledge, in most parts of the world ; so the relation which it bears to, and the advantage it receives from others, may perhaps authorise us to suppose that this course, like to that of theirs, will, notwithstanding such lets still be in the main, and at the long-run appear to have been, really *progressive*. Thus, from the very nature and importance of the forementioned benefits, it seems probable that when these once get footing anywhere, they will gain ground, and propagate themselves to other places ; and draw along with them every thing of consequence that has a near relation to them ; and when religious knowledge stands in this relation, as it does often unavoidably ; it must even in the common course of things [contrary to the nature of mere ignorance, or matters of empty speculation,] it will support and spread its main and most important branches, [such as the supremacy and superintendence of some one God, and a state of final retribution, &c. which have been, and are every where preserved among the heathen. See Part i. p. 34. and *Grot. de V. R. C. L. iv. c. 12.*] and thereby both promote, and be itself promoted by, the

mit a doubt : but whether it actually has or not, becomes

the general advances of the world ; and synchronize with most of its more valuable improvements. [See Hartley's Obs. Vol. I. p. 366.] That this must be the case, in some degree, we seem to have sufficient grounds for proving *a priori* : and from a true state of the fact, with all its circumstances, tis probable, that this would not appear, even now, to be repugnant to it on the whole ; however, that some time or other we may discover things to stand thus ; or at least have room to suppose that they appear so in the eye of the great Governor of the universe ; 'Tis plain, *all* times and places are not equally adapted to the introduction of discoveries either in common science or religion ; and it seems no less clear, from what we now know of the Jewish dispensation, in particular and the frequent revelations that accompanied it ; [which were at first all put under a *carnal cover*, in order to engage their affections, and induce them to take that care, which otherwise they would not have taken in the keeping of them so long as was requisite, (See Lowth's Directions, p. 161, &c.) and afterwards find that these manifestations were unfolded by degrees, and illustrated as the *day-star* began to arise in their hearts ;] and from what has been observed above, p. 160. 190. of the age wherein Christianity itself was published, that men have not been *always capable of receiving all the light* [Winder Vol. II. p. 336.] from each religious institution, which it was fitted ever to convey. It may perhaps be deemed sufficient if they, to whom any such was given, were so far qualified to *hear and profit by it*, ib. p. 193.] as to receive somewhat of it themselves, and hand it down to others in a *competent degree of purity* ; and give it such a *sure foundation* in the world, as would be able to support it till all circumstances should concur which must contribute to its *fulness*, and carry it on to a *state of maturity*. Many of these circumstances seem for some time to have been concurring in several parts of the world ; and therefore may be looked on as so many natural means co-operating to produce this effect there, in the general theory of religion ; allowing for the variations issuing from that principle of *freedom* above-mentioned. And if we view the present growth of science in those parts of the world which we are best acquainted with ; and the established methods of preserving and perpetuating it ;—remembering the connection each of these has with the rest, and with religious investigations as well as others to which they may be applied, to which *application* likewise men seem to be now no less disposed :—considering this, I say, it is scarcely possible to think that such improvements should either themselves be ever wholly lost among mankind, or not at length become the means of raising

comes a very different enquiry*. Though perhaps something

ing and refining others ; and thereby of accelerating a certain *progress*, and advancing it to greater heights, in that of *religious*, as well as every branch of *common knowledge* ; at least that *this* appears to be on the recovering hand, and rising higher and faster by their means, than it could ever be conceived to rise without them : which is, I humbly apprehend, as much as I am concerned to maintain at present, and shall conclude with the observation of a learned friend, * The divine dispensations were not intended to force men to be virtuous ; which indeed is a contradiction. Under any dispensation men may, and will be wicked. For [Dan. xii. 10.] while *many are purified, and made white and tried* (even by the wickedness of their contemporaries) *the wicked shall do wickedly* ; under the brightest dispensation they will walk on in darkness, and *none of them shall understand* ; but *the wise only shall understand*. To the same purpose. Rev. xxii. 11. How general therefore soever an apostasy may be, many even by that very apostasy, and the persecution which attends it, may by such trial be made white and purified ; and consequently the wickedness, even greater wickedness of the wicked, doth not prove a retrogradation in moral or religious principles. For the advances of religion are not to be measured by the wicked, who will do wickedly, and still be unjust and filthy, but only by the wise and righteous, who understand and make a proper use of the divine dispensations. By this rule true religion may have still been advancing in the world. Comp. Taylor scheme of Script. Div. C. 3. or. p. 34.

* ' It does appear to me very *probable*, to say the least, that *Jews and Christians*, notwithstanding all their vices and corruptions, have, upon the whole, been always better than the heathens and unbelievers. It seems to me also, that as the knowledge of true, pure, and perfect religion is advanced and diffused more and more every day ; so the practice of it corresponds thereto : but then this, from the nature of the thing, is a fact of a less obvious kind : however, if it be true, it will become manifest in due time. Let us suppose a person to maintain, that civil government, the arts of life, medicines, &c. have never been of use to mankind ; because it does not appear from any certain calculation, that the sum total of health and happiness is greater among the polite nations, than among the barbarous ones. Would it not be thought a sufficient answer to this, to appeal to the obvious good effects of these things in innumerable instances, without entering into a calculation, impossible to be made ? However, it does here also appear, that, as far as we are able to judge, civilized countries

something may be said in favour of the present times, in both these respects.

First : That in point of knowledge we exceed the wisest among ancient heathens, who either practised, or at least permitted, and connived at the worship of monstrous deities, and most unnatural rites, is readily allowed ; and with reason attributed to the superiority of the *Christian* dispensation ; in comparison with which, former ages are justly termed *days of darkness* : and that we of the Reformation, as much excel the dark times of *monkery*, in rational, true piety, might perhaps be as easily granted ; and with equal justice ascribed to the superior excellence and more strict observance, of our own dispensation. We have indeed less shew and ceremony, now than ever ; less of the *form of godliness* in general ; but 'tis hoped, not less of the real *power*. Unprofitable

austere-

countries are, upon the whole, in a more happy state than barbarous ones, in all these respects.' *Hartley's Observations on Man, &c.* Vol. II. p. 176. Comp. *Laget's Influence of the Christ. Rel. on the Welfare of Society*, Serm. 4.

Claviger? To the same purpose are the reflections of another judicious writer ; who, after describing one of the the most shocking instances of barbarity among the *Americans*, adds, ' It will point out to us the advantages of a religion that teaches a compassion to our enemies, which is neither known nor practised in other religions : and it will make us more sensible, than some appear to be, of the value of commerce, the arts of a civilized life, and the lights of literature ; which if they have abated the force of some of the natural virtues, by the luxury which attends them ; have taken out likewise the sting of our natural vices, and softened the ferocity of the human race, without enervating their courage.' *Account of the European Settlements in America*, Vol. I. p. 192. Whether the *Chinese* or *Turks* are not still more wicked than the *Christians*, may be seen in the authors referred to by *Benson. Reason. of Christ. Rel. App.* p. 303. Add *Memoirs of Dr. Lardner*, p. 81. 82.

austerities are rather changed for that more reasonable service, which renders the Deity amiable, and the imitation of him useful to mankind ; which makes each worshipper more happy in himself, and helpful to his fellow creatures *. There seems to be much less of *superstition*, and reliance on such things as can at best be but the means to religion, and often hardly that ; nay, rather tend to take men off the proper principle, and substitute another very different speculation in its room ; teaching them to compound for real goodness, the substance of all true religion, by that which has not so much as even its shadow ; and leading them to contend about that with such a tem-

per,

* ‘ They take very unprofitable pains, who endeavour to persuade men that they are obliged wholly to despise this world, and all that is in it, even whilst they themselves live here. God hath not taken all that pains in forming and framing, and furnishing this world, that they who were made by him to live in it should despise it ; it will be enough, if they do not love it so immoderately, as to prefer it before him who made it : nor should we endeavour to extend the notions of the stoick philosophers, and to stretch them farther by the help of Christian precepts, to the extinguishing all those affections and passions, which are and will always be inseparable from human nature ; and which it were to be wished, that many Christians could govern and suppress and regulate, as well as many of those heathen philosophers used to do. As long as the world lasts, and honour and virtue and industry have reputation in the world, there will be ambition and emulation and appetite, in the best and most accomplished men who live in it ; if there should not, more barbarity and vice and wickedness would cover every nation of the world, than it yet suffers under. If the wise and honest and virtuously disposed men quit the field, and leave the world to the pillage, and the manners of it to the reformation, of persons dedicated to rapine, luxury, and injustice ; how savage must it grow in half an age ? Nor will the best of princes be able to govern and preserve their subjects, if the best men be without ambition and desire to be employed and trusted by them.’ I.d. Clarendon, Ess. Mor. & Div. p. 96. fol.

per, as could not possibly be exercised, or entertained, in any thing that bore a near relation to the other : It seems, I say, as if there were less of all this ; and that there would be yet less, would all those who perceive its remains, unite in opposition to it, with that zeal and soberness, which true religion only can inspire.

As to that spirit of *infidelity*, which so remarkably prevails at present ; they who are confident that they understand religion thoroughly, and profess it in its utmost purity ; must condemn this humour of examining all parts of it, as absolutely bad and of pernicious consequence : they who are not so sanguine, will conclude that there are very good ends to be served by it ; whatever be the fate, or the intent, of such, (and such it must be owned there are) as most injuriously oppose religion : these will believe that there is the same necessity for suffering this *heretical turn* in general, as for any particular *heresies* ; and that thereby already truths of great importance are *made manifest*, and many grievous errors detected †. They see and lament

† ‘ Since Christianity began to be depraved by adventitious mixtures, there never was an age in which there has appeared so generally, as in the present, a disposition to embrace whatever fair enquiry discovered to be the real doctrine of Scripture, without any regard to the authority of men, or to the established distinctions of sects : and no where has this liberal spirit prevailed so much as in those countries in which infidelity has been suffered, for the longest space of time, to propose all its objections freely, and without the fear of persecution or legal penalties. But the effect of its opposition has hitherto taken place only in part. The heart of a good man triumphs in conceiving the period when it

lament the consequences of our long neglecting to review establishments ; and suffering the *publick wisdom* of past ages to serve here, and here only, for all the following ones (•). They think there has been so much

it shall have fully taken place ; in anticipating the time when Christianity shall become in the writings and in the apprehensions of Christians, as it truly is in the New Testament, not a system of nice speculations and contentious subtleties, but a series of plain principles, evidently founded in scripture, unmixed with the arbitrary explications and precarious conclusions of fallible men, all naturally touching the heart, commanding congruous affections, and by their joint force, directly inculcating piety and virtue, and promoting the reformation and happiness of mankind.' *Gerard's Diff. on the Genius and Evidences of Christianity*, Diff. II. sect. 3. p. 417. Comp. *Price's Four Dissertations*, p. 137. †. 365, &c. and *Priestley on Government*, Pt. iii.

(•) 'There is not a greater solecism in the world than the common one of continuing customs after the reasons for them are ceased.' *King's Essay on the Eng. Const.* 'But there are few Christian princes who lay this to heart, and [most] divines have quite other things in their thoughts: their great business is to maintain what is established, and to dispute with those who find fault with it. On the other hand, knowledge or resolution is wanting ; and there is not enough of honesty or greatness of soul to confess the truth. Few writers have the courage to speak so impartially, as the famous author of the history of the Reformation in *England* has done, in the preface to his second volume. It is thought by many persons, that all would be ruined if the least alteration was made. Some of these defects—are now become inviolable customs and laws. Every body fancies true and pure *Christianity* to be that which obtains in his country, or in the society he lives in ; and it is not so much as put to the question, whether or not some things should be altered. As long as *Christians* are possessed with these prejudices, we must not expect to see Christianity restored to an entire purity.' *Causes of the present Corruption of Christians*, Part ii. p. 271. How applicable these reflections are to the present age, and this nation in particular, may be seen by the reception, which every fair proposal for any farther reformation meets with. See *Free and Candid Disq. 1749.* with the *Appeals* and *Supp.* and the specimen of an *Universal Liturgy*, printed A. D. 1761, To which add an excellent

much *wood, hay, stubble*, built on the foundation, as must take a considerable time to be removed ; especially when they see some men got no farther yet, than to doubt whether there be occasion to have any thing at all removed ; or even to deny that there is reason, either for attempting, or so much as wishing, for a farther reformation.—They observe light, and liberty, at the same time advancing with an equal pace, and affording their mutual help, as they do generally †, to separate these from the *gold, silver, precious stones* ; many have taken the *fan* in hand, and resolved thoroughly to purge the floor ; though some may be apt to throw away part of the good seed, together with the *chaff* ; which also generally has been the case, and is a very natural one.

Secondly ; As to the present *morals*, it may perhaps be a question, whether they grow worse upon the whole ; when it is considered, that the less vices, as well as uneasinesses, of past times are forgot ; and only the most flagrant, notorious ones appear upon

Ent Dedication by the late author of the Essay on Spirit, and Hartley, Vol. II. Prop. lxxxii. p. 270, &c. and Tortin, passim. After all, to find faults and to amend them requires very different talents ; previously to any material alterations in the liturgy and offices of our church, there seems wanting a new version of the whole Bible [towards which very large collections are now ready to be offered, when any person sufficiently qualified is willing to undertake that task] and since the very disposition of examining the original text of one half of it, is but just reviving here ;—that happy time seems to be at some distance from us.

† See Winder's Description of the benefits of *Liberty* civil and religious. Hist. of Knowl. Vol. II. c. 21. sect. 3. or Gerard, Diff. II. sect. 3. p. 415, &c.

on record ;—that we are apt to judge those evils greatest, which we feel ourselves ; and that good least, which seems to rival and eclipse our own ; and raises envy, in the room of admiration :—that hence, one of them is often aggravated, the other extenuated most unduly (?). On which account, the predominant vices of our age and Country, grievous as they are, may not probably be greater or more general ; than the reigning ones of former times, but we more immediately concerned with them, and suffering under them ; (*) and it is to be remembered that these

come

† History has kept no account of times of peace and tranquillity ; it relates only ravages and disasters. *Voltaire Mod. Hist. Vol. IX. c. 211. Comp. Goguet, Part ii. B. i. p. 3.*

(?) See Bp. Fleetwood's 2d Charge, p. 6, &c. Ibbot's Sermon on *Ecclesiasticus vii. 10. Le Clerc, ib. Brown's Causes of Vulgar Errors, B. i. c. 6, &c.* That the same principle, *i. e.* of envy, is at all times no less apt to prevail in the decrying of the present state of *literature*, may be seen in an eminent author's note on Hor. A. P. l. 408. p. 213. 2d Ed. This kind of reasoning is also well supported in a *New Estimate of Manners and Principles, 1760.*

(*) ‘ They who will take the pains to look into the records of former times, and view the religion and policy of our own and our neighbour nations, from the time that Christianity was first planted in them ; (and, God knows, the prospect that we have in most of them before that blessed season, is very dark and unpleasant ;) will be best able to judge and prescribe what veneration is in truth due to antiquity : and it may be, he who taketh the best survey of them, will hardly find a time in which he would wish rather to have been born, or persons with whom he could more usefully and happily have conversed, than in this very time in which he hath been born, how vicious and wicked soever ; or those worthy persons with whom he hath, or might have lived, how depraved soever the greater number is ; as it hath always been.’ Ld. Clarendon, *Eff. p. 227.* What times there were formerly, about the 12th century in particular, may be seen in Ld. Littleton's *Hist. of H. II.*

come attended with the forementioned advantage of light and liberty, in such a degree, as we can never be too thankful for ; and which, we hope will speedily help to correct them ; the one enabling any person to see their evil consequences ; the other allowing him scope to censure, and expose them ; and through both these, each kind and degree of wickedness may become more open, and apparent ; rather than of superior strength and malignity. So that concerning the present times, we have some room to think, that they are not worse than all before them, as to *morals* (e).

Perhaps

(e) A very just account of the morals of the first ages of the world, may be seen in *Goguet* on the origin of Arts, &c. Part. i. B. vi. c. 4. I believe it would be hard to produce modern instances of cruelty and barbarity in any civilized state, whether in war or peace, equal to such as were decreed publickly, and executed without the least seeming remorse, even by the politest people of antiquity ; witness their frequent sacking of towns, refusing quarter, and slaying at least all the males ; their triumphs, torturing and killing slaves ; their proscriptions, poisonings, exposing and murdering children ; [V. *Findlay's Answ. to Voltaire*, App. p. 531. 534. **] rapes, incest, &c. which need no aggravation. Not to mention that savage, defolating way of making war, which constitutes the body of their history ; that horrid treachery, and bare-faced iniquity, which appear on many occasions ; that notorious breach of national faith, and open violation of public decency prevailing in their councils, and avowed by express declarations, whenever the particular interest of their country seemed to be promoted by it. Numberless examples of this occur among the *Greeks*, as well as *Romans*, even in the politest ages of their government. See *Hakewill*, L. iv. passim, or *Johnston de Naturæ constantia*, Punct. iii.—ix. Sir T. P. Blount, Ess. p. 145. *Hume*, Polit. Dis. x. *Spirit of Nations*, B. iii. c. 21. and *Ferguson*, Hist. of Civ. Soc. Pt. 4. § 4. Mr. *Barrington* having recited several old statutes made against certain practices very common in those days, adds, ‘ These are injuries non nostri generis, nec seculi : notwithstanding the general inclination to decry every thing modern, I cannot but

Perhaps I may be allowed to advance a step farther, and suppose them to be better in some respects, and that we have certain virtues of the first magnitude now in greater perfection ; particularly more of true well regulated *charity*, than ever, since the time of primitive *Christianity* (1).—But if this be deemed a mistake,

but imagine that the inhabitants of this country are in the eighteenth century infinitely more virtuous than they were in the thirteenth ; and that the improvements of the mind and regard for social duties have gone hand in hand with the increase of learning and commerce ; nor have I any doubt but that, if any thing like a regular government continues in this island, succeeding ages will not only be more refined and polished, but consist of still more deserving members of society. I would ask those who think otherwise of the comparison between ancient and modern times, whether they suppose, that in the thirteenth century, any one would have thought of sending 100,000*l.* to the inhabitants of *Lisbon* after an earthquake, or would have subscribed to cloth the French prisoners ? Observ. on the most ancient Stat. p. 137. 3d Ed.

(1) I may add, that there seems to be a more perfect resignation to the will of God, and acquiescence in his providence, among all ranks of men ; a greater firmness in enduring pain ; more cheerfulness and courage in submitting to death, among the generality, even of lowest education ; in short, that mankind may be said to grow more spiritual and *intellectual*, in these and many other respects, than they have been in former ages ; which may in a great measure be owing to the many excellent *practical* pieces, and tracts of *Devotion*, which now abound every where ; and which must be allowed to be much more *rational* and judicious, than those of former times. ‘ I think it may be said, in honour of the present age, that [with a few exceptions] controversy is carried on with more decency and good manners, than in any former period of time that can be named ; which, together with the *toleration* granted by law, in this and other protestant countries, for all persons to worship God in their own way ; and that *Christian charity* and moderation, which is generally shewn towards those that differ from us ; seems already to be attended with good effect.—The setting up of so many *charity-schools*, as have of late years been erected in these kingdoms ;—the forming of

mistake, and too partial fondness for the present times; I trust, it will be also judged a pardonable one, amid so much most evident partiality against them; especially, as it is on the charitable side; and tends to make them really better than they would be, did worse opinions of them universally prevail.

Which brings me, in the last place, to the *consequences* that attend the other way of thinking.

These have been hinted at in the beginning of this Discourse; and might be shewn more fully, to affect the honour of God, our own felicity, and that of others; in as much as the foregoing supposition casts a cloud over all the works of God;—confounds our notions of his wisdom, power, and goodness;—raises distrust, if not a disbelief of his perfections, and thereby deadens our devotion towards him;—damps and discourages the study; and destroys the pleasure that would arise from a survey of both the *natural* and *moral* world, and from reflections on the station we hold in them;—renders us far less sensible of the happiness

of *religious societies*, and other good means, have greatly contributed to the promoting the knowledge and practice of virtue and religion among us.' *Worthington*, *Ess. p. 157, 158.*

Upon the whole, we have reason to conclude, that the *restoration of letters*, was so far from being *fatal to Christianity*, or that this has been *in decay ever since*, (as a late noble writer, much more conversant with some kinds of politicks than the present subject, has been pleased to affirm) [*Letters on the Study of History*, p. 175.] that on the contrary, this, where-ever it took place, has greatly tended both to the illustration of its evidence, and the increase of its power, over the minds and consciences of men; and that, in many respects, it has really flourished more from this, than from any other period of time since its original establishment.

pines within our power ; and by consequence, makes us receive the less ;—not only hinders men from growing better, but actually makes them worse ; and suffers the world daily to decline, through a persuasion that it is designed to do so ;—it having been observed, that those writings which *villainize* mankind, have a very pernicious tendency towards propagating, and protecting villainy ; and help the most of all to teach and encourage it (*) ; in the same manner as those
which

(*) In proof of the foregoing observation, not to mention here such foreign authors as *Esprit*, *Rochefoucault*, and *Bayle*, who seem to have taken a deal of perverse pains to eradicate all seeds of humanity out of the human breast ;—sufficient evidence may be had from a famous writer of our own, the author of the *Fable of the Bees* ; who by a shew of superior penetration into the low motives and ignoble passions, which are but too apt to sway people ;—by pointing at the most plausible methods whereby a politician may sometimes *avail* himself of these, as well as serve some present interest of the public in the indulgence of them ;—by a droll way of describing things, and dwelling altogether on the foibles of the worst and weakest of mankind :—draws such an odious, and at the same time humourous picture of the species, as has at once diverted, and debauched the principles of more men among us, than perhaps any other writer of late years.

And though we allow the observation of an abler author of the same stamp, viz. that *principles* have seldom such an immediate influence on the temper or behaviour of men, as a predominant *passion*, or a settled *habit* ; yet we may insist upon it, that the former of these, when perverted, help very much to strengthen and encourage any kind of irregularity in the latter ; at least they are exceedingly apt to discourage any attempt to subdue an exorbitant passion, or inveterate habit—they destroy all vigorous endeavours towards establishing right methods of self government—they indispouse us for attending to that moral discipline, which is so necessary to conduct ourselves with innocence and usefulness through life ; and yet so difficult to be preserv'd in full opposition to the stream of evil custom, or the tide of vicious inclination. Such principles especially, as are advanced in the forementioned book,

which perpetually dwell on the dark side of things, and the several difficulties that attend our search after the

book, instead of exciting us to partake of, and strive to promote the happiness of our fellow-creatures, and to delight in paying a grateful homage to our common Parent ; must rather bring us to a fixed contempt and hatred of them ; give us unworthy, narrow notions of the Creator and Governor of this world, and cut off all the prospect of enlarging or improving them in any other. They must cause a decay of public spirit, and a want of public faith ; a decline and a gradual dissolution of private honour, truth, and common honesty : the very least that can be expected from them is an indolent, unsatisfying state of mind within one's self ; and an aversion towards any pains or trouble in the serving, or supporting others. And though such a deep discovery of the springs of action may shew us, how men may be most easily led ; yet, were it all true, it would shew at the same time, that such creatures are scarcely worth the leading ; since it palls all the pleasure of conversing with them ; strikes at the very root of universal benevolence, which alone can supply that pleasure ; blasts every social disposition, and all the charities of private life : in short, destroys all that is great and good, or amiable in mankind ; or which can make any station eligible amongst them.

But farther, if there be a real system of things pre-established upon quite different principles,—then must such schemes of government at length prove as useless, as uncomfortable ; being wholly founded on a false bottom, and at every turn opposing what they never can overthrow ; since he who framed this system, will assuredly take care to support it in his own way, whether we will or not, and if the original plan on which it was formed, and the laws calculated to direct it, be thought of themselves insufficient to that end ; there is still ground [from nature and reason, setting aside positive declarations] to believe, that he would rather interpose sometimes to secure the establishment thereof, than suffer it to be quite ruined and reversed. The Governor of which system therefore, ought to be attended to in all good policy ; and our political plan framed in some kind of conformity to that great model ; by a careful contemplation of the chief end and prepotent quality in each part of his works ;—by a studious survey of all the dignity, and harmony, and happiness, conspicuous in the general conduct of them. But in such schemes as we are now examining, the supreme Governor of the world is either quite omitted, or introduced in so degrading a manner ; as makes him even dependent on, and obliged to, an evil principle for the beauty

the ways of God, serve only to darken the view still more, and multiply those very difficulties. How much

beauty and chief benefit of his work : it gives so base an idea, both of this system and its Author, as must shock any one who is willing to entertain the least degree of reverence, or regard for either ; or has any just concern even for himself, as being unavoidably linked in close connection with a system ; from whence he is like to receive so little either of true honour or advantage.

How much more just a theory might be erected on sound morals, and a sense of religion ! which would make all true, rational pleasure, coincide with them ; and render the present state of things, not only uniform and absolutely desireable in itself ; but also the direct road, the natural passport to a better :— which, beside a great share of good in present possession, must fill the soul with hope of infinitely greater hereafter. Where every virtue would, in every one, essentially promote and perfect those of others ; and each conspire to exert the natural effects of all, in universal happiness ; without that motley mixture of the contrary qualities ; which can at best but indirectly, and accidentally, and by their being extraneously over-ruled, produce any part thereof. For after all, when once we come to understand ourselves, we shall find that vice in general does, in its own nature, and in every degree of it, tend to produce misery, or prevent happiness, either mediately or immediately, in every system, [from whence indeed it has its name, and on account of which it has been, and ever ought to be, prohibited by divine and human laws ;] though this its tendency may probably be over-ruled in many particular cases ; or it may be suspended, or superseded by the introduction of opposite qualities ; which, through the unavoidable imperfection of language, are often mistaken for it ; or it may be in such a manner really blended and confounded with these, as to be hardly distinguishable from them ; or in such a degree counterpoised and balanced by some jarring principles, or inconsistent species of its own, that its effects are not so plain and obvious ; especially in large societies, and very complex bodies ; where more than ordinary skill is requisite, to compute the consequences of each particular act or habit ; and assign to each influence its proper cause. But this grows more apparent in small families, and private constitutions ; where vice, of every sort and size, is seen to create proportionable corruption, and disorder in the body politic, as surely as *venom*, or a poison properly so called, does in the natural one ; though in some critical circumstances, such a violent struggle and convulsion, may be raised thereby in both

much better is both the end and the effect of those writings, which place human nature in its fairest light ;
and

both of them, as may occasion very extraordinary effects ; and two bad qualities in contest with each other, instead of ruining, may possibly relieve an oppressed constitution ; as sometimes *bina venena juvant*. Yet still, notwithstanding some such very unusual phenomena, the distinct properties and regular production of natural bodies, as well as those of moral qualities, are both fixed ; and discoverable in the main ; we are tolerably well apprised, what naturally conduces to the preservation and prosperity of each ; and on the whole, may rest well satisfied, that if the latter were composed of such a number of rank heterogeneous principles as the same author is inclined to suppose, they would not long subsist as we now find them ; nor could the world possibly go on so well as it has done, and does. So far is that position therefore from being just, which this same author has put into the very title of his book, *viz.* that vice, properly so called, whether private or public, is a real benefit ; that the reverse is strictly true in general ; which might be proved as clearly by an induction of particulars, as Sir W. Temple has made out in one strong case, which was this author's leading instance ; *viz.* that of luxury, or excess, being of advantage to a beneficial trade. See Temple's Observations on the Netherlands, p. 66. fol. [Comp. Hutcheson's Remark, No. ii.] But granting all the facts to be just as this author states them ; were the bulk of mankind altogether as vile and vicious as he represents them ; yet would it be of no real service to lay open such a sink of pollution, and thereby only spread the infection farther still, and faster ; it cannot be of so much use to exhibit men entirely *as they are*, in their very worst light ; as it must be, to place them where they oft really have been, and where they always might and ought to be. Nor can such views of the world prove any entertainment to one, that is either desirous of concurring in any measure for the improvement of it ; or of contributing at all to the ease and agreeableness of his own situation in it.

But I propos'd to make only some general observations on the genius and main drift of this celebrated book, as a specimen of such sort of writings ; the particulars of it having been sufficiently confuted long ago ; and shall conclude with observing, that the celebrated author of the *Characteristicks*, and this writer, who so constantly opposes him, are evidently in two extremes ; the first contending for a benevolence quite pure in kind, and perfectly disinterested, and without any other end than its own exercise ; which

and represent the *lovely form* as worthy of its Author ; as well as of those that display the beauty and beneficence of the divine œconomy ; and produce an assurance of that paternal care, and provident conduct of us here, which brings the truest enjoyment, and most grateful acknowledgment of all present benefits ; and likewise begets a joyful hope and expectation of more solid and substantial ones hereafter !

The consequences of the foregoing doctrine might be urged farther, in regard both to the *atheist* and *deist* ; to convince the one, that all things have not gone on at random ; but that there are plain tokens of a wise plan, and regular government ; and, from what has already past, reason to think, that more of it will ever appear, and in a still more perfect manner : to shew

which is neither reconcileable to fact, nor to the frame of such beings as we are at present ; the latter centering all in *self* immediately, and constituting its chief good in some of the very lowest gratifications : which is alike groundless ; but attended with worse consequences. Between these there is manifestly a middle way, whereby the *moral sense*, and that of *honour*, &c. may be formed by way of *habit*, really distinct from, and striking previously to any private views ; and generally with greater force too, than could be produced by the most vigorous and intense reflection ; yet this may be so far qualified by a mixture of the other passions ; and so well directed to the best and noblest ends by reason ; as to keep clear of all the absurdities of the former system, which runs so naturally into rank *enthusiasm* ; and likewise to avoid the ill consequences that attend the latter, which is so apt to sink us into the very dregs of vice and *villainy*. This has been just proposed above [Part i. note a. p. 10, &c.] and I find no sufficient ground to doubt of its being in itself the most conformable to the true nature of mankind in general, and best adapted to promote the highest degree of happiness in social life. A more particular examination of both the systems abovementioned, may be seen in *Brown's Essays on the Characteristicks*.

shew the other, that as the several dispensations of revealed Religion, have hitherto been in the main conformable to those of Providence, in both the natural and moral world, this may come from the same author; and receive daily farther increase, which these also do, as they are better understood.

But if this be not the case in any degree here, we seem to have nothing left whereon to ground an *analytical* argument (which yet is our very best, natural argument) for an hereafter;—no visible footsteps of wisdom and goodness, to conduct us in our search after a first cause;—no settled foundation for our hopes of futurity, the basis of all natural religion: all is chaos and confusion thus far, and therefore may be so, for aught we know, eternally;—in short, the divine government, if there be one, must on this supposition be inferior to most human administrations^(x).

Thus

(x) This hypothesis, how extraordinary soever it may appear, has met with an ingenious advocate, in a Discourse entitled, *The influence of the improvements of life on the moral principle considered*; desirous to shew, that in proportion to the increase of the former, there is a *constant decrease* in the latter. This Author was obliged by his own hypothesis, to allow the main point, viz. that the PRACTICE OF VIRTUE is not under any such decline, but rather in fact better secured, as men become more civilized, p. 7. as the improvements of life have so far enlightened the minds of men, that they readily discern the connection between certain moral duties, and their own private interest; ib. and yet he asserts, that by the very same means the STATE OF MORALITY in the world degenerates daily, p. 6. His reason is, because the direct tendency of every improvement of life is, to bring about the practice of morality without the principle, p. 7. We have indeed hitherto been taught to know a tree by its fruits, and deemed it the surest way to judge of any man's

Thus then we see, how necessary it is to form right notions of the past state of the world, especially in

man's *principles*, from the constant course of his *practice*; but by this new system we are to understand, that these have very small connection with each other; and that there are some other connections, which will bring about the same thing more effectually. Now since the subject of morality has been reduced to a science, and as such, built on rational principles, the sense of all the terms relating to it has been pretty well agreed upon, and it is generally understood to include thus much; *The doing good to mankind in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness.* [Tracts on Morality and Religion prefixed to King's Or. of E. 4th Ed.] or as it is elsewhere described (*Orig. of evil*, No. 52. p. 266. 4th Edit.) obedience to God is the *principle*, the good of mankind the *matter*, our own happiness the *end*, of all that is properly termed *moral virtue*. This has been shewn to be the true theory of virtue; and that, strictly speaking, nothing less than a regard to the divine will, and a consequential view of happiness, during the whole of our existence, can be its adequate principle and end, so as to form an invariable connection between every part thereof, and our proper duty. Not that a distinct, actual view either of this principle or end is always possible, or requisite even in the best regulated minds here, to render such a course of action, as is denominated *virtuous*, acceptable to, and rewardable by the deity. Nor is it necessary to exclude all prospect of inferior advantages: though the less general such a prospect is, the less virtue there will be in any particular action, (as is observed in Prelim. Diff. to King) provided any such particular benefit be not the sole view in performing it, without which we should never have engaged in such performance. As there are several good ends set in subordination to each other, it may, 'tis hoped, considering human frailty, be sufficient if we take any one of them, and run it up to the supreme, ultimate end upon occasion; (as is observed in the Tracts before King, ib.) if we keep hold of any one link of the chain, so as to be able to draw after it a regular train of really beneficent acts; nay, sometimes we are entitled to the same privilege, if we be led to it by nothing more than a mere habit, association, or affection; (as is made out in the same place) or else we should be forced to exclude from the character of *virtuous*, not only the *bulk of mankind*, but many of the most able philosophers; and it would be hard to brand a steady, uniform course of action, which is so right in the *material*

in regard to that important point, *religion*; in order to judge in what condition it will probably be for the future;

material part, with the name of *artificial*, (p. 8.) or *sham virtue*.

These several qualifications have been laid down in a plan of morals, in order to render it not only rational in itself, but of some real use, and applicable to what daily occurs in common life. But in truth, the ingenious author now before us seems to have nothing of this kind in his thoughts, when he *estimates the state of morality in the world*; contenting himself with carrying on a traffick among its natural *conveniences*, which he conceives may do the business; though how this will ever reach such happiness as may be termed the *ultimate end of morality*, p. 8. or indeed any *moral* happiness at all, is not perhaps so easy to discover. Will it be able to produce the same kind of self-satisfaction, as arises from the consciousness of *merit*, and the well grounded expectation of *reward*? or any other satisfaction in any wise equal to it? If this end could perfectly, or even *in a great measure*, be *answered*, p. 8. by any such *mean*; he would do well to shew us, how we may distinguish that from one of the *real sanctions of morality*, ib. What these same *sanctions* are, he has not indeed told us explicitly; which would perhaps have been a little inconvenient; since if he here intends those that relate to the divine will, whether in this life or another; it may be a farther difficulty to shew, how these can be *found less conducive to private good*, p. 8. than the *artificial* ones; as they most certainly secure it on the whole, which the others do not. If he speaks here only of some *present good*, 'tis no great wonder if a remote prospect of futurity do not affect a man so nearly, as the immediate consequence of things about him: though that too, when rendered present to the mind by due reflection, often yields a portion of happiness superior to any sensual object whatsoever: and to do this, seems a much easier task, than the working out such a certain train of temporal conveniences, as will be sufficient to supply its place.

Again: The *ultimate end of morality*, says he, is *private happiness*, p. 8. And what is virtue, but the direct way to this end? or where lies the great object of virtue, but in the obtaining of this by the most efficacious and consistent means? How then can the *bulk of mankind*, or any body else, be wrong in cultivating the mean, *only so far as they think it productive of the end*? ib. except we revive the old *sloical principle*, of following virtue for its own sake, and without any other end; which principle has,

future; and in what manner we should conduct ourselves with relation to it. If it has hitherto been
really

it must be confessed, been most effectually rooted up by modern improvements; as they have taught us to look somewhat farther into the true nature and consequence of things, than either to act without any end at all, or to mistake means for ends, and esteem that for itself, which was originally required of us, because it leads to something else; and is still of no other use, or excellence, than as it does so: a thing that is only *Good in itself*, or absolutely so, *i. e.* good to no end, being in reality good for nothing, as was observed long ago by *Socrates*. *Xen. Memorab.* B. 3. c. 8. We cannot therefore distinguish between that which naturally leads to the ultimatum of all private happiness; and *real virtue*; since nothing is materially good on any other account, than as it properly conduces to such end; nothing really bad or vicious, farther than it tends to the contrary: and the producing of the first among mankind entirely, and uniformly, must ever be true virtue; call it either *moral* or *artificial*; so long as we have any meaning to the word: and the pleasure ordinarily attending such a disposition in the person himself, and the production of the same in others, together with a return of like good offices from them; or the additional and extraordinary attainment of some degree of happiness, over and above all these, upon the same account; will be, one of them the *natural*, the other the supernatural *sanctions* of it. Why the former of these should not, in their proper place and order, be admitted as well as the latter, I know not. Nor why it should be deemed any degradation, or *degeneracy* in virtue, if, like religion, (which is built upon the very same principle) it be *profitable to all things*; and better our condition both in *the life that now is, and in that to come*. We have no law against attending to the lower of these ends; nay, the constitution of our nature evidently demands it of us: the only fault is, if we stop there, as was observed above; and which perhaps is no more general, than the acting upon habit, or affection, or without any distinct view at all; which will oft be the case with many of us unavoidably.

The designed production therefore of good, *natural* good, may be justly said to constitute moral good; how much soever is to be deducted for the imperfection of the motive: this will be the true, only *rule* of moral actions; and a *conformity* to it most agreeable to the *will of God*; nay, the only sure way of discovering what his will is, so far as that is considered as the foundation of morality. Men may indeed, and too often do, promote the hap-

really progressive, we find good reason to expect the same progress still farther. We have strong motives to go into this scheme ourselves; and clear directions how to proceed in it. Instead of looking back, and labouring to confine it to the model of past times; or even tie it down to its present state and model of improvement*; we learn rather, with the great *Apostle* to *forget those things which are behind, reaching forward unto those things which are before, and pressing toward the mark*†.

And,

happiness of others on what is in the worst sense flyed a private, selfish view; and as often produce partial good by the introduction of a more general, and extensive evil; which actions thereby become either vicious, or at best, to the agent himself, wholly indifferent: but to promote the true happiness of others in any degree, absolutely, as such and so enjoined; though with a view to our own good upon the whole; otherwise it would not be reasonable in us, but romantic; this will ever be true virtue, grounded on a proper principle, and directed to a proper end: and farther than this, we really know nothing either of its nature, principle, or end; nor of its *sanctions*.

* ‘Were the best formed state in the world to be fixed in its present condition, I make no doubt that in a course of time it would be the worst. History demonstrates this truth with respect to all the celebrated states of antiquity; and as all things (and particularly what ever depends upon science) have of late years been in a quicker progress towards perfection than ever, we may safely conclude the same with respect to any political state now in being.’ *Priesley on government*, p. 130.

† *Phil. iii. 13, &c.*—I shall here add the sentiments of an illustrious writer, and an excellent judge of the world; who, had I met with him sooner, would have saved me the trouble of saying any thing upon the present subject; and whose whole treatise is so curious, as to make the length of this, and some other specimens cited from it, excusable. ‘It is an extraordinary improvement that divine and human learning hath attained to, since men have looked upon the ancients as fallible writers, and not as a *Ne plus ultra* that could not be exceeded.—And I do

And, to use the same *Apostle's* advice, *Let us therefore, as many as desire to be perfect, be thus minded.*

As

do in truth believe (with a very true respect to the writers of the 3d, 4th, and 5th ages) that there have been many books written and published within these last hundred years, in which much more useful learning is not only communicated to the world, than was known to any of those ancients; but in which the most difficult and important points which have been handled by the fathers, are more clearly stated, and more solidly illustrated, than in the original treatises and discourses of the ancients themselves.—If then, in truth, all kind of learning be in this age in which we live, at least in our own climate, and in some of our neighbours, very much improved, beyond what it ever was; and that many errors, and some of no small importance, have been discovered in the writings of the ancients; why should we resort and appeal to antiquity for any other testimony, than for *matter of fact*; and thereto without restraining our own enquiry, or rational conjectures.—We do not flatter ourselves, if we do believe that we have, or may have, as much knowledge in religion as they had; and we have much to answer, if we have not more:—It would be a good spur to raise our industry, if we did believe that God doth expect a greater perfection from the present age in learning, in virtue, in wisdom, and in piety, from the benefit and observation which he hath afforded us in all the precedences: From their defects, we have an argument to be wary, and to reform; and from what they did well, we have their counsel and assistance, and may the more easily improve what they did; and we have all the obligations upon us to mend the patterns we have received, and leave them with more lustre to our posterity; who are bound to exceed us again in knowledge, and all degrees of perfection: whereas *a looking back*, and prescribing rules to ourselves from *Antiquity*, retards and lessens even our appetite to that which we might easily attain: we may as well resort to old men to teach us to run, and to throw the bar: if our bodily strength grows and increases when theirs decays, the vigour of our mind doth as much exceed theirs; and since we set out after they rest, we ought to travel farther than they have done, when we carry all the land-marks with us. It is a caution near as old as Christianity, *Nihil magis praestandum est, quam ne pecorum ritu, sequamur antecedentium gregem: pergentes non qua eundum est, sed qua itur.* It has always been a disease in the world, too much to adore those who have gone before, and like sheep

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As we have the best means of effecting this within our power ; as we live under the mildest of all governments ;

sheep to tread in their steps, whether the way they went were the best, or not. Seneca thought, that nothing involved men in more errors, quam quod ad rumorem componimur ; nec ad rationem sed ad similitudinem vivimus ; that we consider more what other men have thought or done, than whether they did think or do reasonably. Nor is it out of modesty that we have this resignation, that we do in truth think those who have gone before us to be wiser than ourselves ; we are as proud and as peevish as any of our progenitors : but it is out laziness ; we will rather take their words, than be at the pains to examine the reason they governed themselves by. But there is hope, the present age will buoy itself up from this abyss of servitude ; and by their avowed endeavours to know more than the former have done, will teach the next to labour, that they may know more than we do : which virtuous emulation should continue and grow to the end of the world.

It may be, the common proverbial saying, that *the world grows every day worse and worse*, prevails with many to believe that we have a good title to be so ; and that it is vain to strive against our fate ; nay, some men think, that there is prescription enough in the Scripture, as if there was such a general decay, that the last age shall be worse than any that have gone before ; in which, I conceive, men are very much mistaken. It is very true, that both St. Paul and St Peter have foretold, that *in the last days perilsous times shall come ; for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemous, &c.* Yet they do not tell us, that these men, which have made a great party in the world in every age, shall prevail and corrupt the rest ; nay, they say the contrary, *They shall proceed no farther, for their folly shall be manifest to all men.* So that we may hope and endeavour to accomplish this prophecy, that the graver and the more modest, the humble, the pious and the chaste part, shall be able to discountenance, to suppress, to convert, or to extirpate the other. We may as warrantably take a measure of those times from that declaration of St. Peter, in the 2d of the Acts : *It shall come to pass in the last days, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughter's shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.* Here is no decay attends this fulness of time ; no resort to antiquity, to chalk us out the way to knowledge and understanding. We are not sure that those last days, to which both those prophecies refer, are not already past ; but we may be sure, that if we spend that time which God shall vouchsafe to give

vernments ; and enjoy the blessing of *liberty* in that perfection, which has been unknown to former ages, and is so still to most other nations * ; a blessing (suffer me once more to remind us of it) which includes every thing valuable in life ; and has, the greatest tendency to accelerate the progress above-mentioned :

give us in this world, in that manner as he expects we should, and as he hath enabled us to do if we will ; we shall leave as fair examples of wisdom, virtue, and religion to those who shall succeed us, as any have been left to us by those who have gone before us ; and our posterity pursuing the same method, the last age will appear at the day of judgment less undaunted than any that hath gone before it.' Ed. Clarendon of the reverence due to antiquity. Eff. Mor. and Div. p. 238, &c. dated Montpellier 1670. Comp. Jonston de Naturæ Constantia. Punct. x. p. 156, &c. That there will be a more rapid progres toward perfection in the latter ages of the world, and that the last will exceed all others, is made highly probable by Worthington, Eff. on Redemp. c. 13, 14. There is something to the same purpose worth taking notice of in the Exemplar, p. 387, &c. Comp. Worthington B. Lect. V. 2. p. 224, &c.

* Remarkably ingenuous is the testimony which a celebrated foreigner, the author of *L'Esprit des Loix*, bears to the excellency of our civil constitution in this respect ; which deserves to be reflected on by every intelligent Englishman, and will, 'tis hoped, in time produce the same amiable spirit in the ecclesiastical. Comp. De Lolme pass.

' It is the part of men, so guarded from the dangers that attend the search of truth in other countries, so blessed with time and opportunity, so adorned with learning and the free use of scripture, to study the Word of God with assiduity and faithfulness ; not as though we were already perfect ; but searching after farther improvement ; confessing ingenuously in the true spirit of Protestantism, which disclaims infallibility, that if our Church should in every doctrine it advances " justify itself ; its own mouth would condemn it ; and if it should say, I am perfect, it would prove it perverse, Job. ix. 20." It is the busines of its members to bring it to perfection by degrees, as they themselves improve in the knowledge of the *Gospel*.' Taylor's Essay on the Beauty of the Divine Economy, p. 62.

mentioned : let us, instead of making it either a covering for *sedition* * against such a government ; or a cause of gratifying our *maliciousness* against each other ; be rather diligent in using it to the good purposes for which it is indulged us ; and render ours as much superior to those nations that are yet deprived of it, as most other countries are observed to have been, in the like circumstances.

Let us concur with this auspicious course of providence, and contribute our respective endeavours towards carrying on this amiable progress, by every serious, fair, and free enquiry : *free*, not only from all outward violence and clamour ; but also from (what our most holy religion with the greatest reason equally condemns, as being the root from whence these evils spring) all inward bitterness, wrath, hatred† :— learning to bear with the mistakes of each other in this, as well as in other matters ; nay, rather the more here ; since these mistakes are of the highest consequence ; and this the only proper method to remove them : thus labouring, as well to reform the errors of our brethren in love, as to promote and confirm their knowledge of the truth ; *not for that*,

* That this is the particular meaning of *zaxia* 1 Pet. ii. 16. Vid: Benson in loc.

† ‘ Young people ought to be taught, that there is no *heresy* so bad, nor so contrary to the spirit of Christianity, as to believe it to be proper or lawful to hate or persecute a fellow-creature and a brother, for an *opinion*, which he declares in the simplicity and sincerity of his heart, he has impartially examined, and thinks he finds to be agreeable to the sense of Scripture.’ *Thoughts on Education*, p. 28.

in either case, we have dominion over their faith; but as being helpers of their joy*, And thus shall religion be at length suffered to partake the benefit of those improvements, which every thing beside enjoys.

I desire it may be observed here once for all, that when I mention improvements in religion, I do not intend a discovery of any new points, or improving upon the original revelation itself †, in things essential to the general doctrine of salvation: but only a more perfect comprehension of what was formerly delivered; a view of the extent and excellence of this great mystery concealed from former ages; and which, though given almost all at once, yet was received but partially; at least by the bulk of mankind, as was observed above ‡; and soon adulterated to such a degree, as (I beg leave to repeat it) may take yet more time to rectify; especially, when so much rubbish has been continually thrown upon the Scriptures, both by translators and expositors; as, if we set aside the care of a particular providence, which has in this respect (so far as relates to the Text**) been very remarkable †; might make us justly wonder

* 2 Cor. i. 24. † See Part ii. p. 166. ‡ Ibid. 162.

** The Jesuits are said to have held frequent consultations some time ago about censuring and correcting of St. Paul's Epistles; [Sir E. Sandys's Europe Speculum, p. 165, &c.] If other societies had been as industrious to correct the comments on them, and review the doctrines deduced from them, it might not perhaps have been amiss.

† See Jones's New Method of settling the Canon, Part ii. c. 2, &c,

der they have not sunk under such a load. This has, in these parts of the world, been for some time clearing off, by the help of a more sound philosophy ; as well as by more sober rules of criticism ; more close, consistent methods of interpretation *.

Though perhaps even here, it would not be a difficult task, were it not too invidious, to suggest means of yet farther improvement. Perhaps we ought to attend much more to the *Hebrew* idiom, than we are used to do, and observe the vast disparity between the Eastern way of speaking, and our own ; for want of which, 'tis to be feared, we oft retain the words without the original meaning, nay, with a very different one † ; and by adhering too strictly to the letter, are very apt to over strain most things ; and carry them both beyond common sense, and the nature

* * I cannot but hope, that when it shall please God to stir up persons of a philosophical genius, well furnished with critical learning, and the principles of true philosophy ; and shall give them a hearty concern for the advancement of his truths ; these men, by exercising upon theological matters that inquisitiveness and sagacity, that has made in our age such a happy progress in philosophical ones, will make explications and discoveries, that will justify more than I have said in praise of the study of our religion, and the divine books that contain the articles of it. For these want not excellence, but only skilful unavilers.' *Boyle's Excell. of Theol.* p. 47.

† —Quo clarius appareat Orientalium Scriptorum stylum, audacioribus translationibus refertum, non ex more nostro loquendi hodierno debere exponi, quae maxima pene est interpretum culpa. Cum sensum *gnosis* investigant, magis attendunt quid ipsi intelligi vellent, si ita nunc loquerentur ; quam quid olim inter populos, non minus opinionibus et ingenio, quam temporibus et locis a nobis remotos, intelligi potuerit. *Cleric. de Stat. Sal. App. Com. Gen.* p. 378.

nature of the subject. Perhaps even our very reverence for these sacred writings misapplied, our too unguarded zeal to do them honour, and support their authority, in every view against that church which substitutes another in its room, may have contributed to cast a cloud over the whole ; which makes us afraid to examine this with the same freedom that we do, and find we must do, every other book which we desire to understand :—I mean the notion of an *absolute, immediate inspiration* of each part and pen-dicle ; even where the writers themselves, by the very manner of expressing themselves, most effectually disclaim it† : which, beside the bad effects it may be supposed to have at present ; when once it appears to have no good foundation in these holy books(μ) ;

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† See instances in *Whitby* on the *N. T.* Gen. Pref. p. 6. Several authors by the influence or *inspiration* of the Holy Ghost, in this case, mean no more than a *particular Providence*, superintending the Scriptures ; yet are afraid to relinquish the old term, how improperly soever they apply it. And we may observe, how hard some good men strain to introduce this sort of inspiration *indirectly*, even when they are obliged to own, that *prima facie* it cannot be justified. Thus *Doddridge* on 2 Cor. xi. 17. ‘ It seems indeed not very just and natural to interpret this, as spoken by immediate suggestion ; yet it being, in present circumstances, very proper the Apostle should speak thus, the *H. Spirit* might by a general, though unperceived influence, lead him into this tract of thought and expression.’ Fam. Exp. Vol. IV. sect. 18. note a. Comp. Paraphr. ib. Vol. III. sect. 33. p. 233. note f.

(μ) As I would not give unnecessary offence in such a tender point, which most writers are still very unwilling to give up, expressly, though they seem forced to treat it either in a confused, or a contradictory way ; I shall beg leave to explain myself a little upon this head.

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'tis to be feared, will produce a worse, by tending to discredit that *partial* one, whether of guidance, and

super-

ditional, and *discreet* in their *choice* of *books*.

The true sense then of the *divine authority* of the books of the O. T. and which perhaps is enough to denominate them in general *Scripturæ*, seems to be this; that as in those times God has all along, beside the inspection, or superintendency of his general providence, interfered upon particular occasions, by giving express commissions to some persons, ((thence called *prophets*) to declare his will in various manners, and degrees of evidence, (see *Smith*, Sel. Disc. N. 6.) as best suited the occasion, time, and nature of the subject; and in all other cases, left them wholly to themselves: in like manner, he has interposed his more immediate assistance, (and notified it to them, as they did to the world) in the *recording* of these revelations; so far as that was necessary, amidst the common (but from hence termed *sacred*) history of those times; and mixed with various other occurrences; in which the historian's own natural qualifications were sufficient to enable him to relate things, with all the accuracy they required. This seems to be at last allowed by Abp. *Potter*, in his elaborate Discourses on the Subject of inspired *Direction*: which he compares to a skilful rider's guidance of his horse, *Praelect.* p. 132. who yet sometimes gives up the reins, and suffers him to take his natural course. See p. 140, 156, 158, 165, 169, 194, 195, and 196. The scripture-language is in this respect paralleled with that of the old *Pythian* oracle, where *Plutarch* says, non Dei vox est, non sonus, non metrum; sed Fœminæ. Under the same inspiration are included several instances of mere human infirmity, or ignorance, p. 202, and want of memory, 203, and even *various let-
tings*, 198. Is all this any more, than what we commonly mean by a providential permission? or can any other influence of the Spirit be introduced here, beside such as may be supposed to concur with the operations of mankind in the ordinary acts of providence and where a supernatural interposition would have been unworthy of its author? which mixture of divine and human, in the same times, things, persons, and their history, appears conformable to the other works of God; and affords many circumstances of credibility, which, though some of them seem to come in by the bye, and are often contained in a mere parenthesis; yet furnish a much clearer evidence of the truth, and will in all ages more incontestably confirm, the genuineness of that relation which is attended with them; than if such revelations had been all made and recorded at one time, by themselves, and by men altogether over-ruled in their delivery.

This

superintendency, (if that can properly be called such) or of *suggestion*, which upon some occasions they do claim;

This likewise appears in a good measure to have been the case with the *N. T.* writers; who, notwithstanding the things they were to deliver are mostly of greater consequence, and more closely connected in point of time, place, and other circumstances; notwithstanding the extraordinary assistance of the *H. Spirit*, which was to abide with them, and lead them into all necessary truth; and for the most part either the thing itself shews, or they give us distinct intimation; when they have recourse to that assistance: yet from the very form in which they usually express themselves, it must appear, that this influence is no less frequently suspended; it being perhaps peculiar to the *Son of God* himself, to have the *Spirit* at all times *without measure*, or limitation: [see *Doddridge* on *Job.* iii. 34. *Fam. Ex.* Vol. I. p. 162.] And beside the more fundamental truths, how oft do the same persons condescend to treat of other inferior, controversial matters; useful indeed, some to the then present, some to all future times; but surely of a very different nature from the former; and in the delivery of which that influence and assistance does not seem so requisite! How justly do they place the evidence of facts, on their own senses only! declaring *what they have seen and heard*; which at all times may, and which alone can at any time be produced as proper proof. In reasonings, how beautifully do they add their private judgment; and in affairs of smaller moment, even their conjecture or opinion; to what they had received from the *Lord* himself! where circumstances shew us the expediency of such additions; and where common sense was, and will be always, equally sufficient to distinguish one from the other; as it is to interpret the whole Scripture without any infallible guide.—But common sense is too often laid aside in subjects of this nature. Many good men think, they can never do too much to decry it; to set the Bible at variance with it; to carry the whole up beyond its reach; though by schemes merely of their own invention; rather than forming any judgment from what they really find in that sacred book. Not content with a *moral evidence* of its *truth*, which is clear, strong, and every way sufficient for the conviction of all fair-enquirers; (vid. *Jacquelot de la Verite, et de l'Inspir.* &c. c. 6. p. 45.) they must needs introduce another, where there is no room for it; and insist on such *universal, absolute infallibility*, as never can be made out, to those who are not already persuaded of it; (and who can have no other evidence for such persuasion, than the same moral one, on which that *truth* is grounded) and which

claim ; which is requisite to secure a due authority to them ; and which, when prudently distinguished from

which is at last either useless ; or inconsistent with those natural proofs, which constitute the credibility of this and every other history so circumstanced. Is not a moral evidence enough to assure us of the genuineness and incorruptness of these writings ? Why should it not then, where it can take place, be sufficient for the authors themselves to proceed on in their writing ? and equally ascertain the truth of what they have written ? and why should the generality of the composition, (were any great stress ever to be laid upon it) be deemed altogether divine ; when the conveyance, which so much effects that, and in which so many parts of it have suffered, is allowed to be no more than human ? Most persons now begin to see, that there is at least some mixture of this latter, in the language ; and I believe, upon due consideration, it will appear that there is no greater difficulty to admit it in the matter, upon several occasions ; nor perhaps any danger in extending that observation to the writings of the Apostles, which a very cautious author on this subject has applied to their conduct. ‘ If we consider how strong a temptation they would have been under to think too highly of themselves, if they had been under a constant plenary inspiration ; it may appear a beauty in the divine conduct to have left them in some instances to the natural weakness of their own minds, (Comp. 2 Cor. xii. 7, 9, 10,) and sometimes to suspend those extraordinary gifts in particular, as he did those of healing, (Comp. 2 Tim. iv. 20. Phil. ii. 27.) still providing by other hands, a remedy for those ill consequences which might have arisen from an uncorrected mistake.’ *Doddridge, Lect. Part vi. Prop. cxvi. p. 330.*

I trust the candid reader will believe that I can have no intention here to degrade the holy Scriptures, in any respect, but rather to free them from an unnecessary load of objections, and render them more useful to the chief purposes for which, I humbly apprehend, they were designed ; hoping thus much may serve to occasion some more accurate enquiry into this important subject ; which has indeed been frequently discussed in different parts of the Christian world ; but never, so far as I know, with that fairness, freedom, and impartiality, which the thing evidently requires : and whether this be a proper time to canvass it thoroughly ;—whether the generality of Divines be qualified to form more just and clear conceptions of it now, than formerly ; is with all deference submitted to better judges. See the authors on this subject in note (ii). p. 162. with *Middleton’s Miscell. Tracts*,

from the other, has, and we trust, ever will appear to have, sufficient ground to support itself.
To this blind reverence for the words of holy Scripture, perhaps I may be allowed to add another, full as great, relating to the *sense*: not the true, genuine one; for which we cannot surely have too much concern; but one which sometimes widely varies from it, and yet is very apt to slip into its place; —the commonly received, *traditional* one. This doctrine we learn from those very adversaries, which in the former case we were striving to oppose: and though indeed it have a shew of humility and a proper deference to public wisdom; yet in time, probably, may be attended with no better consequences: if men will not distinguish pure, primitive *Christianity*, from that which oft may happen not to be such, and if in this point, which of all things is most deserving of their care and caution, they content themselves with the opinion of the multitude: and take that for a sufficient rule, which they know to be far from even excusing those who have the means of judging for themselves; —and which they would be extremely unwilling to abide by in almost any other case*.

But

N. 1, 2. Warburton's Serm. vi, p. 225, &c. and part of a posthumous treatise of Castrillo on the interpretation of Scripture, considered under the threefold distinction of *Oracles*, *Testimonies*, and *Opinions*; inserted in Wetsten's N. T. Vol. II. p. 884, &c. or Benson's Essay on Inspiration, annexed to his Paraphrase on 1 Tim. and Townson's Disc. on the four Gospels, p. 62, &c.

* Do not we blame the *papists* for their implicit faith; for believing as the church believeth? And how are we better than they,

But I should be sorry to be found so far contradicting my general design, as to make things in any respect, worse at present than they really are. On this subject, I could hardly avoid hinting at some of those impediments, that seem to lie most in our way toward perfection ; and hope at this time of day, such a hint may be hazarded without offence : and that notwithstanding those or any other impediments we have encouragement enough left to proceed with chearfulness and vigour in carrying on this same progress ; till every thing which lets, in God's good time be taken away ; and true religion, righteousness, and virtue, shine in perfect beauty : *till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*

they, if we take up our religious principles on trust, and do not carefully adjust them by the standard of divine revelation ? Perhaps those who have gone before us, who yet may be allowed to have been pious and virtuous men, did not see the truth in this and some other cases ; and good reasons may be given why they did not : But must not we therefore endeavour to understand it ? Must their knowledge be the precise measure of ours ? or, must the truth and word of God, be limited by any human understanding whatsoever ? What if they had known but one half of what they did know, must we never have known more ? What if they were under strong prejudices of education, and would not examine ? What if they so reverenced the opinions of other good and learned men ; or imagined these points to be of so sacred a nature ; that they durst not examine ? or, what if they fancied them so much above all human comprehension, that it was their duty not to examine ? or so clear and certain, that there was no need to examine ? or of such weight and importance, that it was impious to examine ? Whatever their foibles, or whatever their fettters were, what is that to us ? Are we not bound to follow Christ, and to call him alone Master ? Taylor on Or. Sin, p. 623. 2d Ed.

R E.

REFLECTIONS
ON THE ^{W²³}
LIFE and CHARACTER
OF
CHRIST.

and should be done by the King, or by the Parliament, according to general usage, as follows. I will now, in short, write at present, only what I have to say about the first. Second hand, and without any particular reference, that I may be more concise, and more easily understood; and lastly, I will add, what may be required upon occasion, concerning those or other such regulations, which the encouragement of such a cause as ours, and our actual removal from England, will bring us into.

THE ELECTIONS.

It is agreed between us, that we shall make our election, in the first place, in the County of Kent, and

PILGRIM CHARTER.

Now, if we take up any principles on this subject, it is necessary that they be well agreed of, before we proceed to any thing else. And so far as we who yet are to be allotted in

CHARTER.

But such are we, whose condition is miserably bad, that we have no knowledge of the publick treasury, or any thing else, but what we have been told. We should be extremely unfor-

tunate, if we did not know but one half of the sum total of what we have been told. What

we do know, is, that there are some of us, who would be willing to pay a sum, to represent the expenses of other goods, and to pay these goods to be sent to us, and to contribute very much of their money to the same, in consideration of the great trouble, and expense, which we have to undergo, in getting our supplies, and our wages, and our rations. But suppose

we do not know, what we do not know, and what we do not know, is, that we do not know, what we do not know, and what we do not know, is,

which did not go before such a set of men.

REFLECTIONS ON THE

Life and Character of CHRIST.

THE true intention of the Gospel writers was not to give a complete account of all the things that Jesus did, (a) much less of all the reasons, and occasions of them; but only to record so many naked facts (b) of each kind, as would be abundantly sufficient

(a) How far this was from being so, may be seen in *Le Clerc*, Harm. Diff. p. 587. from *John* ii. 3. Add *John*. xx. 30, 31. *1 Cor.* xv. 5. and *Macknight*. Prelim. Obs. to Harm. Passim. The same appears to be the case with several of our blessed Saviour's *reasonings*, where the Evangelists, particularly St. John, use a shortness of style; and for the most part, may be supposed not to relate them at large as they were spoken; but to set down the principal heads thereof leaving their conciseness, to be supplied by the care and attention of the devout reader.' *Clagett*. Serm. Vol. III. p. 88. where a remarkable instance is produced to this purpose.

(b) "To make evident, who that master was whose disciples they professed themselves, their business was to tell how they knew him, what miracles he had wrought, and all those other particulars which we read in their gospel: in which they make use of no disquisitions, but in a plain and faithful narrative, declared their knowledge of these matters. And this looks like the singular care and wisdom of divine providence, that nothing of human invention might be said to be mixed with the Gospel, which could

cient to lay a sure foundation for our faith in his divine mission, and by that faith lead us to eternal happiness.

And indeed the account which we find there delivered, plain as it is and simple, (and by that very simplicity, the more credible) (*c*) is in itself of so very extraordinary a nature; and exhibits such an amazing

not have been prevented, had the apostles in their writings set down, not only what they themselves had seen, but their conjectures also, and deductions from the actions and sayings of our Saviour!" *Le Clerc.* Harm. Diff. p. 611. Comp. *Jacquelot.* de la Ver. et del'insper. des livres. du V. et N. S. Part. II. c. 6. p. 301. 305, &c. or *Duchal.* Serm. I.

" It doth not appear, that ever it came into the mind of these Writers to consider, how this or the other action would appear to mankind ; or what objections might be raised upon them. But without at all attending to this, they lay the facts before you, at no pains to think whether they would appear credible or not. If the reader will not believe their testimony, there is no help for it ; they tell the truth, and attend to nothing else. Surely, this looks like sincerity ; and that they published nothing to the world, but what, upon the best evidence, they believed themselves.' *Duchal*, p. 97, 98. It is likewise remarkable, that through the whole of their histories, the Evangelists have not passed one encomium upon *Jesus*, or upon any of his friends ; nor thrown out one reflection against his enemies ; although much of both kinds might and no doubt, would have been done by them, had they been governed either by a spirit of impudence, or enthusiasm. Christ's life is not praised in the gospel, his death is not lamented, his friends not commended, his enemies not reproached, nor even blamed ; but every thing is set down, just as it happened ; and all who read, are left to judge, and make reflections for themselves ; a manner of writing, which the historians would never have fallen into, had not their minds been under the guidance of the most sober reason, and deeply impressed with the dignity, importance, and truth of their subject.' *Macknight*, Harm. Prel. Obs. p. 65. Comp. Dr. *Gerhard's* Differ. Diff. i. sect 2. or *Lardner's* two very excellent Discourses on the internal marks of Credibility in the N. T. Memoirs of his Life, &c. p. 248, &c.

(c) See *Gerhard's* 1st Diff. on the evidence of Christianity.

(c) See *Gerrard's 1st Diff.* on the evidence of Christianity.

scene of wisdom, and goodness; as must when duly attended to, convince us, that it could have no less than a divine original.

That the great Messenger and Mediator of a new Covenant, fixed in the divine decrees from the beginning, foretold by the ancient Prophets;—and announced by an host of Angels;—that he should at length appear, not only in the form, but real Nature of Man, and in its most imperfect and forlorn state, under all the wants, and weaknesses, and pains of infancy;—that he should receive the divine communications in slow degrees (*d*), and mixed with all the infirmities of childhood!—That after such wisdom and knowledge had been imparted to him, as was far above his present situation, he should nevertheless continue for the best part of thirty years, under a silent subjection to his parents, in a low, laborious employment, which contributed nothing in a natural way, to the acquiring of such attainments as might qualify him for that high office, which he was then to undertake: (*e*) that when he entered on his ministry, and was endowed with full powers for the discharge of it, and able to

(*d*) *Luke*, xi. 52. vid. *Whitby*.

(*e*) His deferring it to that age was, as *Lightfoot* observes, according to the law, *Num.* iv. 3, 23, 35, 43, 47. That at the commencement of this office, he was very properly prepared for the execution of it, by a due exercise of private meditation, and intense devotion, as well as by a lively prefiguration of the principal difficulties that attended it, is well shewn, in *an Enquiry into the Nature and Design of Christ's Temptation in the Wilderness*, by *H. Farmer*.

destroy his several adversaries with a single word, he should still undergo the various assaults of those, who eagerly pursued him for no cause, but one that merited a very different return; viz. his labouring to rescue them from their captivity to sin and satan, and restore them to the liberty of the sons of God; by reconciling them to his government, from which they had so long deviated;—raising them from that abject state of degeneracy and corruption, into which they were fallen;—reducing them to a right sense of their duty, and thereby reinstating them in the divine favour; and rendering them meet to be partakers of a happy immortality:—all this taken together constitutes such an amazing instance of the most benevolent condescension in *Jesus*, as must, one would think, provoke our love and gratitude, tho' we were not able to account for every circumstance attending it. Just reasons however, may be assigned for his appearing in this way rather than any other.

From all God's dispensations for the government of mankind, in matters of religion, it is plain, that, though he affords evidence sufficient to convince impartial judgments, yet there is none of such a nature as to confound their understandings, and compell their assent: But had Christ come from Heaven in the full brightness of his Father's glory, in some such manner as the *Jesuit* missionary was pleased to represent to his *Chinese* auditory (see that very remarkable discourse in *Millar. Prop. Christianity,*

anity, v. 2. p. 291.) had he made his first appearance publicly among the Jewish rulers, proclaiming his divine commission, and demanding their immediate submission to his authority by a train of stupendous miracles: so that none of them should have been able to withstand him;—this method, beside its giving too much countenance to the wrong notions they had entertained of the Messiah's kingdom, and encouraging them to come into it without proper qualifications, and upon principles directly opposite to its real constitution and design;—this would have been too violent and overbearing to have left any room for merit, any exercise of the moral virtues in those who adhered to him upon such views; and the relation of it would have been of too suspicious a nature to engage the belief of distant ages and nations; it would have been far from affording any competent trial of that humble, upright, and ingenuous temper, which is the chief glory and happiness of each sincere worshiper of God; the discovery and exercise whereof, was to be one great end of the Messiah's office: And to encourage and reward which is the true aim of all religious dispensations.

adly, The circumstance of our Saviour's being introduced, in so low a state as that of a common infant, appears no less proper to confirm the truth of his mission. In order to prepare the world for his reception, to keep up an expectation of his advent,

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as well as to distinguish him when he did appear, the several qualifications, relative to his person, pedigree, &c. were at large described long before. It was promised in particular, that he should be of the seed of *Abraham*, tribe of *Judah*, family of *David*, &c. but, if he had appeared at first in an adult state, he would have born no more relation to one tribe or family than another: If what some of the *Jews* advanced, from their traditions, (*f*) that *when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is*, were true, it would have been impossible, for any such prophecies as these to have been accomplished, and extremely difficult for the people, to whom he was primarily sent, much more for others, to haye come to a sufficient certainty about him.

3dly, This circumstance that Christ, the great deliverer of mankind, should himself be subject to so many difficulties in the course of his undertaking, however harsh and humiliating it may appear, yet furnishes one of the strongest evidences that both his commission and his qualifications for the discharge of it were from above. Had *Jesus* studied every branch of science, under the ablest masters of those days, we might have ascribed his eminent accomplishments to their assistance and direction; but when absolutely destitute of all such means of improvement he bursts out of obscurity at once with a lustre

(*f*) *John vii. 27.* Vid. *Whitby* and *Bp. Chandler's Def.* p. 250, and *Vind.* p. 429.

that surpasses all the sages of antiquity, we cannot but look out for some superior cause of these extraordinary effects. To proceed,

When in the prosecution of this great and generous undertaking, he meets with a most unkind reception from that nation to whom he had been originally promised, and who were so fully prepared to expect him;—instead of publicly displaying all the powers with which he was invested, and admitting all that homage, which, the high character of such an heavenly messenger might have most justly demanded (g), instead, I say, of accepting that due tribute of esteem and veneration which must naturally attend the opening of his divine commission with

(g) These Divine powers were principally designed, as the seal of his mission, and accordingly were very rarely applied to different purposes: Which appropriation of his miracles to their original intention, served to point that out more clearly, and keep it constantly in view, to manifest the wisdom and necessity of the works themselves, and to preserve their dignity and authority, which would have been greatly impaired, by a more general application of them; and as Christ seldom applied them to any purpose foreign to their grand intention, so it was in a peculiar manner necessary, that they should not be employed merely to protect and preserve himself from the calamities, to which human nature in general, or the particular malice of his enemies exposed him. Had he saved himself by miracles, from all the difficulties and distresses, which attended his situation in life, where had been his conflict, his victory, his triumph? or where the consolation and benefit his followers derive from his example, his merit, his crown? sufferings were the theatre, on which he displayed his divine virtues; and they were both the ground of his advancement to the glorious office of our Redeemer, and a natural means of inspiring him with compassion towards all who were to follow him.' *Farmer's Enquiry into Christ's Temptation*, p. 71, 72. Comp. *Benson's Life of Christ*. p. 34.

with the plain, honest, and undefining people ; but which would have no other effect upon the inveterate prejudices, pride, and ingratitude of their rulers than to make them more obstinately resist the council of God against themselves, and reject, and even despise, the gracious terms he had to offer ;—instead of magnifying his office, and claiming all the distinctions and regard due to the painful execution of it, he kindly chuses to avoid every instance of extraordinary respect, if it might have a tendency to raise their envy or provoke their indignation : (b) He conceals his pre-eminence under the mean garb of poverty, and suits the several parts of his conduct to his present situation ; withdraws himself out of the common road of popularity, confining his wonders for the most part to private places and obscure villages ; till he had done enough to ascertain the evidence, and establish the belief of his divine authority amongst them ;—till he was ready to finish all that remained for him to do, in a more public manner, by witnessing his last *good confession*, both to the Jewish and to the Roman magistrates, by declaring

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(b) To name one instance out of many. A strong proof of this appears in his forbidding the leprosous person to divulge the manner of his cure. [as he did others in like cases, for the same reason ;] and likewise in ordering him to present himself to the Priest's examination, who was to judge of and bear testimony to his being perfectly cured ; and who might otherwise have taken occasion to complain of him as a violator of the law, and an invader of the sacerdotal office. *Matt.* viii. 4. *Mark* i. 44. *Luke* v. 14. See *Le Clerc, Harm.* p. 92. or his Add to *Harm.* on *Mat.* viii. 4. or *Lightfoot Harm.* Vol. I. p. 648 or *Benson's Life of Christ* c. 9.

the true end of his coming into the world ; and bearing testimony to his most unblameable life, before these iniquitous judges ; and (which was the necessary consequence of that, without either violently over-ruling them, or miraculously escaping from them) sealing the same confession with his blood.—Consistently with the same plan the persons he chose for partners in this work were of the meanest class, as well in station as abilities, who could only follow him at first upon the lowest views, and would at every turn be urging and impatient to have these accomplished : nor were they to be let into his real aim, but by slow steps, and after a long series of gentle discipline. Such persons were in many respects most difficult to be dealt with ; yet on the same account, the fittest instruments in that for which they were intended, namely, to testify what they had so often seen and heard : and on all accounts proper to afford the best, most unexceptionable evidence to futurity ; such as could by no means be supposed capable of themselves either to conceive a scheme so great as that of reforming *a world* : or entertain the least hope of accomplishing it when suggested to them ; such as wanted both courage and conduct to attempt this vast design with any tolerable prospect of success ; such lastly as he must suffer often to doubt and to dispute with him ; sometimes to distrust, desert, and even deny him ; to convince after-ages, that they were such, as could

could not with the least shew of reason, be suspected of having at first concerted all this of themselves, or carried it on afterwards among themselves, or effected what they did effect of it, by any methods merely human⁽ⁱ⁾.

With such as these did Christ hold conversation during the whole course of his ministry; affectionately complying with their weakness, and patiently enduring their perverseness, in order to cure them both; to strengthen their faith by degrees, and free them from all superstitious fears; to open their eyes, and enlarge their understandings so far, that at length they might, *even of themselves judge what was right*, and teach the same to others. To these, and by them, to the world he sets a perfect pattern of humility and resignation to the will of God; of meekness, and the most extensive benevolence to man; demonstrating to what height virtue may be carried, under the most disadvantageous circumstances, and shewing the practicableness of each part of our duty, in the greatest difficulties. With the utmost zeal and constancy does he labour to dissuade,

(i) *Mirum est quam parum acuti essent apostolorum nonnulli; sed data opera tales a Christo, electos fuisse verisimile est; ne dum putabant se intelligere quis esset, quidve moliretur, quidpiam ingenio suo freti, quod Evangelio noceret, aggredierentur, neve possent, dogmatum quae nunciabant, inventores haberi.* *Cleric.* in Joh. xiv. 7. Comp. id. Ecc. Hist. Ann. xxvii. 14, 15. How different is the character of St. *Paul*, and with what propriety therefore was his call deferred till different qualities, and talents, became of equal use to the propagation and defence of the Gospel! Vid. *Locke*, reasonableness of Christianity, p. 500, &c. *Sol. Cumming's Serm. on Matt. xi. 5.* Scotch Preacher. V. 1.

and drive men from their ruin; and in the most endearing manner strive to draw, and win them over to their truest happiness, and raise their minds above the little interests of this lower world. *Little children, yet a little while I am with you,—but let not your hearts be troubled; I go to prepare a place for you. Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*

Having denied himself the comforts and enjoyments of this world, and at length laid down his life in executing the great plan of conducting men to a better; he rises again to revive the hopes of his desponding followers; and converses familiarly with them to confirm them in the faith, by a full assurance that he had all power in heaven and earth.—And great occasion was there for such ground of comfort to them, who thought they had lost him, for whose sake they had parted with all other comforts. Greater yet to reform and rectify their notions of, and expectations from him; which were still fixed on immediate prospects of some temporal advancement, notwithstanding, all that he had taught them to the contrary (*k*), nor

(*k*) That the true scope of his whole Sermon on the mount was to correct the carnal notions they had entertained of the *Messiah's kingdom*, and the bad dispositions they were under in consequence thereof; and that this is the right key for opening the proper meaning and connection of that Sermon, is demonstrated at large by *Blair*, Paraphr. on the ~~the~~ 5th 6th and 7th chapters of St. *Matt.* and throughout his discourses on that subject.—That it contains all things, which were necessary, to the salvation of those hearers, to whom our Saviour at that time addressed himself. ib. Vol. iv. S. 20. p. 301.

could they help concluding that he would at this time certainly make use of all his power in the destruction of his and their enemies ; and the erecting of the so long expected kingdom, to which every other kingdom of the earth should bow. But he soon shews them how far this was from being any branch of his office, as described by the prophets ; how inconsistent with his whole behaviour in discharging it ; that on his very first entrance on it he had rejected the offer of these kingdoms, and their glory, and that for the future they must think of renouncing all their narrow, national prejudices of being a peculum crowned with conquest, wealth, and power :—that instead of coming a *Messiah* to bless his people in their sense, by distinguishing them from all the rest of mankind in things, to which they had no better title, and of which they were not likely to make any better use ;—by not only delivering them from their subjection to other nations, but reducing every nation into an absolute submission to them ;—that he was to bring them blessings and deliverances, and raise them to a dominion of quite another kind ;—to bless them by turning every one of them from those iniquities to which they were enslaved ;—to deliver them from their spiritual chains of darkness, death, and misery ; and lead them to the light of life, and happiness in his heavenly kingdom : This they were to become the means of opening to the rest of the world, inviting mankind to enter

enter with them into that inheritance; as their ~~for~~-fathers had been the great instruments of bringing men to the knowledge of that one true God, who is the giver of it, That as these his followers had all along seen ample proofs of his divine legation to this purpose, and were now to be let into the nature and design of his undertaking, so far as they ~~were~~ capable of bearing a part in it, so they should shortly be invested with sufficient powers to carry it on without him, and enabled to proclaim and propagate it to the ends of the earth. After forty days spent by Christ in training and preparing his disciples for this great work of establishing a kingdom of so ~~very~~ different a sort, and to be established by ways so different from what they had hitherto imagined, he meets them all together, leads them out to some distance from Jerusalem, takes leave of them with his last solemn benediction, and having promised to give them yet further proof of his care and love by sending them another comforter, ascends visibly before them into Heaven.

Having taken a short view of our Saviour's conduct, more particularly in private life, and run over some of the steps of his *humiliation*; let us stop a little to reflect upon the great excellence of such a character, and observe some of the signal benefits, which we receive from this part of his conduct.— Whenever we turn our thoughts upon the infinite perfections of the most high God, and try to form

some adequate apprehensions of them, though they appear well worthy of all adoration, yet is our view of them but faint and dim, on account of their sublimity and distance from us, and what views we may have of them, are apt rather to excite astonishment and awe, than move the softer more endearing passions; and therefore the ideas of loving and delighting in God, were such as the most elevated heathen writers could not reach: nor indeed had they among all the crowd of their divinities any proper objects of it.

But here the deity lets himself down to our capacities, and becomes on a level with our tenderest affections; discovers himself under the intimate relations of a friend, a father; displays such an affecting scene of the mildest, and most merciful condescension, as must strike even the dullest, warm the coldest heart.

The Lord who knows our frame, sees that we are not capable of beholding him in his full glory, and therefore kindly draws a veil over it, suiting his several dispensations to the feeble subjects of them. He sends a messenger in our own state and circumstances, who being encompassed with our infirmities, experiencing our difficulties and temptations, and having a fellow-feeling of all our troubles, might shew how well qualified he was to bear with us, and teach us to bear them; to have compassion on the ignorant, and those that were in error; pointing out to us the true way to happiness, and enabling

us to walk therein ; leading us gently by the hand*, inviting and encouraging us to come to God through him. *I am the way, the truth, and the life ; he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. All that my Father hath is mine : I and my Father are one, as I and you are one.*

Thus he, who was to his own people formerly the *Lord of Hosts*, a mighty God and terrible, jealous, avenging ; and whose whole worship was stiled *fear*, (a worship fitly accommodated to such people;) is now to men of more enlarged minds, under this proportionably more indulgent dispensation, *the God of all joy, and consolation ; the Father of mercies* ; whose children and heirs we are said to be ; whom we are taught to approach in a more liberal way, with a true filial assurance ; whose darling attribute is goodness ; and the first principle, and great commandment in his law, the end and the completion of it, *Love.*

These amiable representations illustrated in the most easy and agreeable manner ; must above all things tend to strengthen and confirm our faith, enliven our hope, and draw our whole soul after him that so loved us, and dwelt amongst us : especially that, which was the greatest possible instance of affection for us, his voluntarily laying down his life, to reduce us from a state of misery and disobedience, and reconcile us to the happy, gracious govern-

* *Lactant. de Ver. Sap. L. ix. 24.*

government of our heavenly Father. This cannot but endear his *character* to all, who are capable of giving attention to it; and will in a much nearer and more tender manner unite him to us, and make the memory and contemplation of him more affecting, than that of any other Being, however great, good, and glorious, who has not undergone the like kind office, or appeared in such familiar lights to us.

And though, in order to direct our reason to the principal object of religious worship, and guard against every misconception of our true relation thereto, we are oft reminded who it was that originally provided this redemption for us; yet in that other, no less essential, (perhaps with the bulk of mankind the predominant) part of our nature, by which religion and every thing else takes the strongest hold of us;—the *passions*; we are necessarily touched in a much more sensible manner, with what is so very obvious to our present comprehensions, and as it were analogous to what we feel among ourselves; and may be satisfied, that the benevolent author of our being will make due allowances for this, so far as it becomes unavoidable; which is in some degree the case at present universally; and every one that reflects upon the general turn of his own mind in his devotion, will, I believe, find it to be so: which is in this respect, an experimental proof of the propriety and beauty of the plan before us.

And

And as this dispensation was well suited to the frame of human nature in general, and an improvement on the foregoing one to the Jews; so it was no less properly accommodated to the state of the heathen world; and no less necessary in the circumstances under which that then was, and must in all probability have continued.

The founders and supporters of religious institutes among the Gentiles, had no better ground for them than uncertain tales of empty apparitions of their fictitious deities, or as blind and vague reports of their transactions; some of these ill devised by themselves, others in great part copied from true scripture history, or primitive tradition; but all so much abused and blended with each kind of vice and folly, to comply with the general corruption, and suit the several tastes and tempers of particular countries; as at length, rendered the whole little else than a gross compound of absurdity and immorality; and made their very worship and devotion impious. Their system of doctrines and subsequent rites, must, by this means, be extremely complicated; and vary according to the various degrees of superstition and impurity that reigned amongst them: yet were so far, all of the same cast and complexion, that there could be no great room for a competition with each other, in point of either authenticity or excellence; it would be hard to distinguish between the different sorts of evidence producible in different places for the

the one ; or of the reasons that might be alledged to vindicate the other ; since *custom* was the common plea for both : since both were equally uncertain in their origin ; and both alike *unprofitable as pertaining to the conscience*. So that when any species of *idolatry* was once established in a nation or city, it must, with the generality, be either a point of necessity to abide by it, since they could find no better ; or appear a matter of indifference, whether they should exchange it for any other ; or admit that other along with it, as occasion served ; and this might well be left to the determination of the state.

Such were the circumstances of the heathen world, when *Christ* appeared, to put an end to all those *lying vanities*, and turn men to the *living and true God* ; by exhibiting a plan of religion in every respect worthy of such a Being, and which would lead them to the love and likeness of him.

Farther : men had been so long used to the notion of supernatural appearances, and messages from Heaven, and a *pretence* of these been made the ground of every article of faith, and mode of worship ; that nothing but a *real one*, clear and better circumstanced, could be conceived to prove effectual toward bringing the generality to a firm belief in one true, spiritual, invisible God ; and induce them to worship him in *spirit and in truth*, and assure them of always finding access to him, through one sole all-sufficient *Mediator*. Dry, abstract reasoning,

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would go but a little way with the vulgar, who, though they are most susceptible of sudden impressions, yet require something strong and visible to strike them ; nor would a few transient signs and dazzling wonders, serve to make any such impressions last. Of these they had already but too many reported among them ; and the more common such reports grew, the less were they regarded; not only on account of their suspicious evidence ; though that was enough to discredit them ; but chiefly for want of a connection with some regular course of instruction, and a set of doctrines worthy of such a divine interposition : and of their being expressly produced as vouchers for these doctrines, and applied accordingly to confirm that interposition.

This did *Christ* frequently perform in the most public manner ; and hereby did his institution outshine every part of heathenism, as well in point of evidence afforded to it, as of instruction conveyed by it. From whence might be drawn another proof ; both of the usefulness of such a plan, and of the great necessity that there was for it.

But I proceed to some remarkable circumstances in our Saviour's life, and manner of teaching.

As to the former, we cannot but observe a surprising mixture of humility and greatness, dignity and self-degradation, in his general demeanour ; both which were equally instructive in their turns. Sometimes we find him solemnly asserting the dignity of his commission, at other times the meekest and

and the lowest of the sons of men ; sometimes informing his followers that he could command legions of angels were it necessary ; at others, apprising them, that he should be more destitute of common conveniences than even the beasts of the field, or birds of the air ; now telling them that a greater than *Solomon* was amongst them ; now washing his disciples feet. Conscious of his own power and just prerogative, yet all submission to the powers in being ; complying with their laws and institutions, however hazardous, or inconvenient to him ; and paying their demands to the uttermost, though at the expence of a miracle. On some occasions, publishing the character and office which he bore ; on others, carefully concealing them ; in order to prevent the hasty misconstruction of his friends ; to guard against the inveterate malice of his foes ; and gain sufficient time to fix a good foundation for the faith of all.—None more industrious and zealous in the cause of God ; none more indifferent and resigned in his own : He patiently endures all kinds of affronts and outrages offered to his person, as well as the frequent insults on his reputation ; and intercedes for the forgiveness of his murderers : yet when his Father's honour is concerned, he vindicates it with uncommon warmth ; he publicly chastises the prophaners of his temple ; and threatens the severest punishment to such as continued to blaspheme the power and spirit by which he was acting. He is ready

ready to receive publicans and harlots ; disdains not to converse with heretics and schismatics ; persons most odious and of worst repute ; but whom he sees to be truly penitent, and equally desirous of instruction : while he rejects the formal, sanctimonious hypocrite ; and reprimands the self-sufficient *Pharisee*. He detects, and with authority rebukes, the flattery of the proud, perverse querist ; but satisfies each scruple, and resolves every doubt, of the sincere and humble searcher after truth, even before they are so much as intimated to him. He cherishes the broken-hearted, comforts the desponding, strengthens and supports the weak and wavering ; condescends to the infirmities of the meanest, that has the least spark of goodness in him ; but never gratifies the vanity, or gives way to the petulance of the greatest.

Nor did this mixture of so various, and seemingly opposite qualities, which constituted the foregoing contrast, proceed from any variation in his own temper, but wholly in that of those among whom he conversed. He steadily adheres to the same principle, and constantly pursues one plain and uniform design, of doing all the service possible, on all occasions, to all sorts of people : of doing it in the most agreeable manner too, whenever that becomes consistent with their real interest : sympathizing with men in their several states and dispositions ; suiting himself

himself to every one's circumstances and capacity, applying to each part of the human constitution for access; and watching every motion of the heart to gain admittance: being himself ever affable, and easy of access to all that seriously applied to him; accepting any invitation, and admitting every instance of respect: nay making a voluntary tender of his company whenever he knew it would be seasonable and acceptable: indulging the most secret wish of such as would receive an obligation from him; and enhancing that by his engaging readiness to confer it. He submitted to the lowest offices for the sake of others, and was at every body's service that desired his assistance. He condescended to the meanest company when he had a prospect of doing any good upon them; and was content to lose the reputation of being a good man, that he might the more effectually serve the ends of piety and goodness*.

His conversation was free and familiar; open and undisguised, sober and rational: his carriage clear from all affected singularity; all rigid and unnatural severity; and any of those austere forbidding airs, which used to be put on by some others, and were apt to procure them so much awe, upon the like occasion. His very miraculous works, were no less evident signs of mercy, goodness, generosity, than of power: And equally adapted to convince the understandings, and engage the affections of those who beheld them:

* *Lorwth's Directions*, p. 197.

as to remove their maladies, or to relieve their wants, his first public miracle, being no more than a proper act of kindness, or humanity ; in preventing the confusion of a poor relation, by a very seasonable supply of what was wanting in his entertainment ; which want, perhaps could not have otherwise been supplied ; and was most probably occasioned by the extraordinary concourse he himself drew thither; (σ) his

(σ) *John ii. 1, 2, &c.* At such times, the *Jews* were wont to make such entertainments, and some of the ancient Prophets reliev'd the necessities of the indigent, in the like generous manner. — *Elßner p. 68.* This, notwithstanding all these evident marks of benevolence in this miracle of our blessed Saviour, beside many others that might have been mentioned ; (such as his giving countenance to a due celebration of that divine Institution which soon afterwards grew into so much disrepute, and justifying that liberal use of all God's creatures which came to be so extravagantly censured, (see *Jortin's Remarks*, Vol. II. p. 18. or *Theol. Repos.* Vol. III. No. 3. yet) has met with no better treatment, than any other circumstance attending either his character or mission. *Chubb* has been at the pains to revive some of *Woolston's* idle objections on this head, without either making any improvements on them, or taking the least notice of the large and clear answers given to them ; as is the common way with this kind of writers. He dwells upon the *barshness, impropriety, and fallaciousness*, of Christ's reply to his mother ; and urges the *intemperance*, which must have been promoted by this miraculous production of wine. *Post. Works*, Vol. II. p. 185-6-7-8.

As to the *barshness*, which arises chiefly from the word, *woman*, in our own language ; he has been shewn, that *wom* is a term used by the best writers very consistently with the highest respect ; and as such, most undoubtedly applied elsewhere to the same person ; *Job. xix. 26.* That the phrase *τι γυναῖκας εἰσιν*, was no more than a common expression of some gentle rebuke for intermeddling in another's province ; *2 Sam. xvi. 10. xix. 22. 2 Kings iii. 13. 2 Chron. xxxv. 21.* and might be exceedingly proper, and even necessary at Christ's first opening his commission, in order to guard against any suspicion of his mother's having concerted matters

his last being no less than an instance of the highest
and

matters wth him; (as the same author would insinuate, p. 168.)—
to prevent her interfering at all in it, or pretending to any influence
or authoritative direction, in the case of working miracles especially;
which was of public concern: and so the following words
may be taken interrogatively, *πότε οὗτος οὐ παρέσχε;* *Is not the time*
of my ministry now come? To which we may add, that whatever
apparent slight or severity occurs in this or any other circumstance
where she is introduced, it may have been ordered providentially,
(as the same thing seems to have been done on the like account
in other cases, v. g. that of St. Peter more remarkably;) to
guard against those many gross abuses of her name and interest,
those very grievous corruptions that in after-times were set up in
the church of Christ, and supported chiefly by that near relation
which she bore to him according to the flesh. To the same purpose
may be applied those other seemingly disparaging accounts,
which he is pleased to give of such relations, in comparison of
those, who stood related to him in a much higher sense, *viz.* a
heavenly one; *Matt.* xii. 46-50. *Mar.* iii. 31-35. *Luk.* viii.
19-21. xi. 27, 28. See *Clarke's xvii. sermons*, p. 236. [and on
the same principle might be founded that remarkable estrange-
ment between John the Baptist and our blessed Saviour, notwithstanding
their being so very near relations; as is observed by
Doddridge on *Job.* i. 31. *Fam. Ex. Vol. I.* p. 122, not. c. Add
Jortin, Disc. v. p. 194. 2d Ed. and *Dr. Bell's Enquiry.*] As to
his *hour not being come*, if taken in another sense, i. e. of doing
any thing for her benefit in particular; that may relate to the
hour of his death; agreeably to the common use of this word in
the Gospel, (comp. *Job.* vii. 8, 30. viii. 20. xii. 27. xiii. 1. xvii.
1. In like manner at the very beginning of Christ's ministry, the
Devil is said to depart from him for a season, *Luk.* iv. 13.
though that was so late as till his last suffering, called their *hour*,
i. e. that of his enemies, and the power of darkness. *Luk.* xxii.
53.) for which, to prevent all secular views, he might prepare
her at the very entrance on his office; signifying that she was to
receive no kind of worldly advantage from it till he left the
world; and when that time came, he recommended her accord-
ingly to his beloved disciple; who took her to his own home, and
provided for her as if she was his own mother. So far was
Christ's reply from any of that *fallacy* and *contradiction*, with
which this author has been pleased to charge it, that even on
this imperfect view of the case, we may be able to discern clear
tokens of the same divine wisdom and disinterested goodness here,
which shines out in each of his other discourses.

and most undeserved compassion, in calmly healing
the

Nor is there any more ground for that other suggestion of excess, from the guests having drunk so freely as to exhaust plenty of wine; ib. p. 188. since from the known regulations at all marriage-feasts, there was no danger of it; from the low circumstances of the person entertaining here, no room to apprehend that any extraordinary plenty could be provided; but rather the contrary: nor from what Christ supplied, the least encouragement given to intemperance, during the remainder of the feast, which lasted several days; commonly seven: and wherein, if we will suppose that this wine must have been all drank up, which we have no occasion to do; [see Jennings, Lect. B. iii. c. 2. p. 136.] as much might easily have been consumed by an extraordinary conflux of the people in a few days, as would perhaps have otherwise held out the rest. [V. Lany. Com. in Harm. p. 109.] So little reason was there any way for such rude insults on this part of our blessed Saviour's history; that it might easily be shewn to be of a piece, and bear the same characters of wisdom and goodness with the rest. As the Gospel was first to be offered to his own countrymen, (to whom the promises were made) whether they would hear, or whether they would forbear; and whose rejecting of it turned to the more immediate benefit of the rest of the world; so was this public occasion very properly made use of for the opening of it, in the first place, to his kinsfolk and acquaintance; who, if they were not before acquainted with his divine mission, from any miracles performed in private, [though it is very probable, that some of them were, his Mother, in particular; see Doddr. on Job. ii. 3.] had hereby a fair opportunity of fully canvassing its evidence, and consulting him upon it, during all the festival; might easily have satisfied each other about the truth of his pretensions, and entitled themselves to the honour of being his first disciples: Though for no less wise and good reasons, most of them were permitted to lose all such opportunities of being instructed by him, to shut their eyes and harden their hearts amidst the clearest and the strongest evidence, and at length become of all men the most inveterate adversaries, both against him and his doctrine: Which yet, instead of impairing the credit of either, served to illustrate it the more, and render it more incontestable to others in all ages; by clearing the whole from all possible suspicion of any family contrivance;—of being carried on by private compact; (as the same conduct in the rulers did effectually from the charge of its being any

the wound of one of those who came with eagerness* to take away his life ; and at the same time shewing, that with the same ease he could have delivered himself, or destroyed his enemies.

The like might be observed in almost every other case, where he exerted an extraordinary power ; which he did, in a manner that more peculiarly suited his own character.†

But what we are now considering in the life of *Christ*, is its more ordinary course, and common tenor, which we find chiefly conversant in *social duties*, as these come into use most frequently, and are of the greatest benefit to mankind ; and setting us a pattern of performing these, which was the most inviting to us, the most imitable by us, and the least capable of ever being mistaken, or perverted : A pattern not only of perfect innocence, but likewise usefulness in every circumstance, and situation ; of joining

any part of their own national policy;) or having been calculated for the separate interest of any particular place, or party of men whatsoever. Nay, every one of these persons who either rejected him at first, or afterwards forsook him, without ever being able to discover the least circumstance of such a design, affords plain proof of the contrary ; as might be made appear beyond all contradiction.

* ‘ *Malchus had come out, with violence, to apprehend him ; and had perhaps treated him with some peculiar insolence, so as to provoke Peter to cut off his ear.*’ *Benson*, p. 439. He is supposed to be one of those servants who smote *Christ* upon the face [Mark xv. 65.] even after a miraculous power had been exerted in his favour.

† A proof of this, and a specimen of the moral or spiritual, as well as prophetick import of our Saviour’s miracles, may be seen in *Jortin’s Remarks on Eccl. H.* Vol. II. p. 16, &c.

ing sometimes in such relaxations both of mind and body, as would tend to the comfort and support of each ;—such prudent, moderate enjoyment of the good things of this world, as might convert them both to the present, and future benefit of all those who partook of them :—Of undergoing all the toils and difficulties, labours and distresses, to which we are subject ;—of bearing all the evils and afflictions, the crosses and calamities of life ; with so much patience, constancy, and perseverance, as would prevent our sinking under them ; and at length make us *more than conquerors* over them. A pattern, of particular affection and esteem for friends ; of general kindness, and good will toward enemies ; of gratitude and love for each good office, of meekness and a most forgiving temper under any ill usage ;—of obedience to superiors, either in church or state, so far as is consistent with our duty to the supreme governor (†) of mildness and condescension to infer-

(†) In proof of this, beside the instance already given of his most scrupulous exactness to avoid the least appearance of intruding on another's office ; we may observe, that when he is obliged to expose the great hypocrisy and villainy of the Jewish doctors, who were the most injurious adversaries of his cause, he carefully distinguishes between their authority or commission, and the exercise thereof ; between their publick teaching, and their practice.

The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses's seat ; all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do ; but do not ye after their works ; for they say, and do not. Matt. xxiii. 2, 3. Hoc dicit Christus, ne putaretur aut adversarius esse Mosis, aut eorum odio, aut cupiditate principatus, ipsos in sequentibus reprehendere. Et quoniam defectus in personis, non professione, erat ;

fiors ;—of justice, fidelity, benevolence and charity to all. In short, his whole life was a lecture of true practical philosophy, and each part pointed out some virtue proper for our imitation*. [For this we have the testimony of unbelievers themselves. “ In Christ we have an example of a quiet and peaceable spirit, of a becoming modesty and sobriety, just and honest, upright and sincere ; and above all, of a most gracious and benevolent temper and behaviour. One who did no wrong, no injury to any man, in whose mouth was no guile ; who went about doing good, not only by his ministry, but also in curing all manner of diseases among the people. His life was a beautiful picture of human nature, when in its native purity and simplicity ; and shewed at once what excellent creatures men would be, when under the influence and power of that Gospel which he preached unto them †.]

Which brings me in the next place, to his *manner of teaching* : and this was likewise the most natural and easy that could be imagined. He generally draws his

erat ; providet, ut, personarum ratione posthabita, muneri, ministerio, et professioni ipsi, sua dignitas integra maneat. *L. Brugens.* in loc. Comp. *Walzogen*, p. 370.

So far is our Saviour's history from consisting of that angry opposition to his superiors, as such ; or from discovering that envious, aspiring, factious disposition, which some persons have had either the weakness, or the wickedness to suggest.

* See some of the principal of these virtues specified in *Bp. Fowler's Design of Christianity*, c. 5. or *Duchal*, on Christ's general Character, Serm. I. II. III.

† *Chubb. True Gosp. of J. Christ*, sect. 8. p. 55, 56.

his doctrine from the present occasion ; the conversation that is passing ; or the objects that surround him ; from the most common occurrences, and occupations, from the time of the day, the season of the year ; the service of the Jewish synagogue, (v) or their

(v) Thus, he alludes sometimes to the manner of teaching there ; *Matt. x. 27.* *Quod in aure auditis, praedicate.* Doctor, qui auditoribus aliquid traditionale prælegebat et exponebat, non quidem clara voce rem efferebat, sed leni susurro, Hebraica in aurem interpretis mussitabat ; qui deinde id sonore sermone vernaculo enuntiabat populo. *Lamy.* Harm. p. 187. Comp. *Lightf.* in loc. et in *Matt. iv. 23.* [Where another allusion occurs in the latter part of the verse, about proclaiming on the house top. *Lightf.* Vol. II. p. 180.] Sometimes to the lesson read therein : *Luke iv. 17.* Vulgo sentiunt interpres casu traditum Domino librum *Isaiae* ; sive potius divina providentia procurante ut ille traderetur, ubi clarissime de Christo prophetatum erat. Verum magis eluxit divina providentia si hoc Sabbato legeretur pars illa *Isaiae*, in qua invenit locum ubi scriptum erat, *Spiritus Domini super me :* Sic incipit cap. lxi. *Isaiae*, quod legebatur Sabbato 1mo aut 2do Mensis Tisri, ut videre est in lectionariis Judæorum. [Comp. *Lightf.* in loc. or *Wait's Gosp. Hist.* B. ii. f. 5.] Hoc autem anno vitæ ejus circa quem hæremus, æræ Christianæ 31mo, duo illa Sabbathi, in quibus Isaias prælegebatur, incidebant 1mum in 8vam diem Septembri, alterum in 15mam. Congruit illud tempus parabolis fementis, quas modo proposuerat Dominus ab ipsis rebus præsentibus, ut sapientiam ejus decebat. Etenim in mense Tisri semen terræ mandabatur ; ut videre est in illis verbis paraphraseos Chaldaicæ in Ecclesiastem xi. 2. *Da portionem bonam semenis agro tuo in Tisri, et ne cohæaris a seminando etiam in Chisleu.* Id. Harm. p. 258. To which may be added *John x. 1*, &c. as below, and *John vii. 37, 38.* *Lamy* pursues this circumstance of Christ's alluding to the lesson for the day so far, as by it to adjust the time and order of several passages in the Gospels, v. g. *Luke x. 25-37.* Idecirco autem hanc parabolam Samaritani refero ad tempus quod pentecostem subsecutum est ; quia hanc parabolam videtur Dominus proposuisse in synagoga, occasione scripturæ quæ tunc ibi legetur. Illud enim, *Ecce quidam legis-peritus surrexit tentans eum,* indicat sedisse hunc legis-peritum, et de more proposuisse quæstionem Domino ; quam ille solverit, convertens animum et oculos legis-periti ad ipsam Scripturam modo lectam ; quod indicat illud,

their solemnities; from some extraordinary accidents, remarkable places, or transactions, and the like.

Thus, upon curing a blind man, he calls himself *the light of the world*; and admonishes the *Pharisees* of their spiritual blindness, and inexcusable obstinacy in refusing to be cured and enlightened by him §. On little children being brought to him, he recommends the innocence and humility of that state, as very proper qualifications for all those, who would become true members of his church; and under the same figure, intimates the privileges that belong to all such†. On being told, that his mother and brethren came to seek him; he declares to all those among his disciples, who were desirous of learning, and disposed to follow his instructions, that they were equally dear to him, and should be equally regarded by him, as his very nearest friends and relations*. Beholding the flowers of the field, and the fowls of the air, he teaches his disciples to frame right and

Iud, *Quomodo legis*, &c. Locus autem Scripturae, ut puto, erat versus 5tus cap. 6ti *Deut*. quod caput legebatur ultimo Sabbato mensis *Ab*, uno aut altero mense post pentecosten. Id. p. 219.

The same author observes, that the order of time being generally neglected, both by S. *Mark* and S. *Luke*; their narratives are to be regulated as well by the foregoing observations, as by comparing them with S. *Matt*. who was an eye-witness of most things, and therefore went by a *local memory*. Comp. *Newt. on Dan.* p. 152. or *Hartley, Observ.* Vol. II. p. 103.

§ *John ix. 5, 39, 41.*

† *Mark x. 14, 15. Matt. xviii. 4, 5, 6, 10.*

* *Matt. xii. 47. Mark iii. 32. vid. Benson, c. 10. sect. ii.*
Other instances of this kind may be seen below, p. 319.

and worthy notions of that providence which supports, and therefore will support beings of a rank so much superior to them*. Observing the fruits of the earth he instructs them to judge of men by their fruits and not to be themselves unfruitful, under all the means of grace †. Taking notice of their behaviour at a feast he first gives general advice therein, to both the master and his guests‡, to the one that he should direct

his

* *Matt. vii. 26, 28. Luke. xii. 24, &c.*

† *Matt. vii. 16. Luke vi. 43, &c.*

‡ The not attending to our Saviour's manner of instructing occasionally, and by a special instance then occurring, [though he was from insisting on that very particular instance, farther still from confining his doctrine to it;] instead of laying down immediately the principle, which either would extend to that and the like instance, or produce an equivalent, as the case required; —this has given room for a great deal of indecent drollery, on *Luke* xiv. 12. 13. from *Chubb.* [Post. works. p. 24. &c.] as if instead of directing our beneficence to such in the first place as wanted it most; which is all that can fairly be implied, and which is surely unexceptionable; *Christ* had confined his direction to that one particular mode of hospitality; and required all his disciples, who were of ability, to invite the poor, lame, blind, &c. to their tables: to entertain such there, and such only: which would as *Chubb* says in the same strain, p. 27. be something extraordinary.

/far

I shall add two or three parallel passages, which may perhaps help to procure this a more favourable interpretation; at least, will shew the precept to be not so very peculiarly *Christian*, as this same gentleman is pleased to represent, in order to burlesque and expose it: [ib. p 26 &c.] And in truth, with just as much probability, as he thinks *washing the feet*, is one of the positive institutions that belong to Christianity, annexing it to Baptism and the Lord's Supper. ib. p. 277.

Cic. off. 1. 15. *Hoc maxime officij est, ut quisque maxime opis indigeat, ita ei potissimum opitulari; quod contra sit a plerisque, a quo enim plurimum sperant, etiam si ille his non eget, tamen ei potissimum inserviunt—Plin. Epist. ix. 30. Volo eum qui sit vere liberalis, tribuere patriæ, propriaquis, affinibus, amicis; sed amicis dico pauperibus: non ut isti, qui iis potissimum donant, qui donare*

his munificence to such as stood most in need of it §, to the other, that they beware of that affection of place ~~at~~ and distinction which was so troublesome to the rest, and generally ended in their own mortification ; and afterwards brings them to the consideration of a better entertainment, to which they were all invited ; but of which few among them would be persuaded to render themselves worthy ||. From meat and drink, he

leads

donare maxime possunt. Hos ego, vescatis hamatisque muneribus, non sua promere puto, sed aliena corripere.

With regard to the last mentioned precept of washing the feet, which *Chubb* pretends to be of perpetual obligation, [and which some Sects of Christians, have not understood much better,] give me leave to add the explanation by *Michaelis*, Introd. to the N. T. p. 254. The washing of feet was in the Eastern Countries, commonly the first kindness shewn to a traveller, who was to be hospitably received ; whence it is sometimes put for hospitality in general, 1 Tim. v. 10. When therefore *Christ* washed the feet of his disciples, and taught them to condescend in like manner, to their inferiors ; it amounts to as much, as if he had instituted the law of Hospitality, among all his future disciples. Now as strangers are the objects of this law, and not persons who live together in the same place, he by this commandment, obliged all his future disciples to love each other, and abolished the distinction between Jew and Heathen. This is the true meaning of this action of *Christ*, which many have interpreted so strangely. Comp. *Babmer*. Diss. xii. p. 550. who among the things retained in the primitive Church, without sufficient authority, reckons *lotio pedum mimica*, a salvatore minime mandata. That this was not to be interpreted literally, or understood as a standing ordinance in the Church, is well shewn by Dr. *Bell*, on the Lord's Supper. p. 142. &c.

§ This is all that *Christ* can be supposed to mean, Luke xiv. 12, 13. When in his way of instructing occasionally, and by a special instance then before him, he exhorts his followers, when they make a feast to call the poor, the maimed, &c. V. *Crell. Op. Tom. ii. p. 55.* with *Le Clerc. Whitby. Grot.* in loc.

|| Luke xiv. 7. 16. Comp. *Doddr.* in loc. Thus, probably a wedding procession passing by, gave occasion to the beautiful Parable of the ten Virgins. *Wynne on Matt. xxv. 1.*

leads them to the eating of his body, and drinking his blood, in a spiritual sense; the being nourished with his doctrine, and partaking of his kingdom*. From outward washing, to the purifying of the heart, and cleansing the affections†. From tasting of the fruit of the vine after the Paschal supper; to the celebration of an eternal festival of freedom, rest, and happiness in another world‡. From the *salt*, he takes occasion to acquaint them with the nature of their office, which was to season the minds of men, and keep them from the contagion of this world; as well as give them a true taste and relish, for the enjoyments of that kingdom; and at the same time reminds them of the absolute necessity for their
duly

* *John* vi. 31. 53, &c. See a like allusion on the mention of meat, *John*. iv. 32. The same thing in all probability, occasioned that remarkable answer to the *Syrophænician* woman, *Matt.* xv. 26. *Mark*. vii. 27. in which he calls the heathen *Dogs*, not in conformity to his own sentiments, but to the common language of the *Jews*; glancing perhaps as he spoke it, at those who sat at table with him, and thereby secretly reproving the insolence of such harsh language and hard thoughts. See *Lamy*. Harm. 31. and *Lightfoot*, in loc.

† *John* xiii. 8.

‡ *Matt.* xxvi. 29. *Luke* xxii. 17, 18. Ex occasione vini conspicui et proprie dicti, Christus docet discipulos se non amplius celebraturum cum his ullam liberationem, nisi postremam illam qua ex omnibus malis resurrectione liberabuntur. Describit cœlestem illam hilaritatem *potione vini*, non tantum quia hujus rei incidit mentio, paulo postquam vinum bibisset; sed quia *bibere vinum* in Scriptura perinde est ac convivari [vid. *Esaïæ* c. xxii. 13. xxiv. 9.] felicitas vero sub imagine convivii describitur, ut c. viii. 11. Addit *vinum* hoc fore *novum*, quia apostoli antea nunquam hanc felicitatem gustaverint. Sæpe Christus a rebus corporeis ad spirituales transiens eas iisdem *qcibus* exprimit. *Cleric.* in *Matt.* xxvi. 29.

duly executing this their office ; otherwise, instead of being the best, the purest, and most useful ; they would become the most worthless, and most incurable among mankind §. Those that were fishers, he teaches how to catch men || : and shews them how much this would resemble their former employment, in taking of all kinds both bad and good ; which were at first inseparable, but would at length be carefully distinguished from each other *. Seeing the money-changers, he exhorts his disciples to lay out their talents to the best advantage †. Being among the sheepfolds, he proves himself to be the true shepherd of souls, describing the particulars in which his character exactly answered that of a good shepherd, even so far as to the giving, or *laying down his life for the good of his sheep* ‡, i. e. exposing himself to certain death in the protection and defence of his flock from beasts of prey. Among vines, he discourses on the spiritual husbandman and vine-dresser ; and draws a parallel between

his

§ *Mark.* ix. 50. vid. *Cleric.* *Luke* xiv. 34. vid. *Whitby* in loc.
|| *Luke* v. 10. *Mark* i. 17.

* *Matt.* xiii. 47.

† *Matt.* xxv. 27. *Luke* xix. 23, 45.

‡ *John* x. 11. 15. Or that discourse of Christ's which is here referred to, might be drawn from *Isa.* xl. 11. part of that chapter being the lesson appointed to be read about that time ; as *Lamy* gathers with some shew of probability. To which we may add, that the title of *shepherd*, so frequently given by the prophets to *Messiah*, [Ezek. xxxiv. 23. xxxvii. 24. *Zach.* xiii. 7. *Psi.* lxxx. 1.] was by the *Jews* applied peculiarly to him. vid. *Allix.* Judgment of Jew. Chap. 304. And he applies it to himself accordingly. *Matt.* xxvi. 31. *Mark* xiv. 27. from *Zeph.* xiii. 7.

his vineyard, and the natural one †. At the Sun rising, he says, *I am the light of the world, he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.* q. d. The Sun arises to set again in a few hours, and may fail many of you, ~~ever~~ you have / 272 finished your journey: but every one that receives and governs himself by my doctrine, shall have a constant and continual guide, sufficient to direct him to eternal life ‡. Upon the appearance of summer in the trees before him, he points out equally evident signs of his approaching kingdom §. At the season of fruits, he puts the *Jews* in mind, that the time was come when some would be expected from them, in return for all the labour that had been bestowed upon them; and intimates the judgment, that would shortly overtake all such among them as were found to be unprofitable*. When the harvest comes on, he reminds them of the spiritual harvest, or the gathering of his church among them; admonishes them to labour diligently in that work, and add their prayers to Heaven for success†. From their slaves having been lately made free

† *Matt. xxvi. 30. John xv. 1.* See another allusion, in all probability, to a *Vine* before him, in *Doddridge* on *Job. xv. 1.*

‡ Vid. *Doddr. on Job. viii. 12. com. Wetsten* in *Job. i. 5. p. 838.*

§ *Luke xxi. 29. Matt. xxiv. 32.*

* *Matt. xxi. 33. Luke xiii. 6.*

† *Matt. ix. 38. Luke x. 2.* A like comparison between the season of a spiritual harvest, and some circumstances in the natural one, occurs *Job. iv. 35, 36. Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeþ,*

free on the sabbatical year, he takes occasion to proclaim a greater and more noble freedom from the slavery of sin and bondage of corruption †. And from the Jewish ceremony of fetching water on the last day of the feast of tabernacles, in commemoration of the miracle wrought for their fathers in the thirsty wilderness; he introduces an offer of that true living water, which should be unto them a well springing up unto everlasting life; the gospel of immortal happiness and salvation; and the plentiful effusion of the Holy Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive ||. Upon a report that cer-

tain

reapeth, receiveth wages; and gathereth fruit unto life eternal. In which words Jesus alludes to the number of Samaritans coming to him, and who now began to appear in sight. He points towards them, and calls upon the Apostles to behold the agreeable sight, and consider his approaching harvest. *Benson, Life of Christ, p. 123, 386.* Comp. *Clarke in loc.*

† *John viii. 32. V. Newton on Daniel, p. 149. Comp. Whiston, 6. Diff. p. 311.*

|| *John viii. 37, &c. Comp. John iv. 10.* where the same image is made use of on the like occasion. Vid. *Cleric. ib. et in v. 14. Et Lamy, Harm. p. 324.* In *Job. vi. 38.* The first of the passages may likewise be considered as a more particular allusion to the lesson for the day. In *Sabbato circa hunc novissimum diem tabernaculorum occurrenti legebatur lv. Isaiae;* quod animadversione dignum est. Sic enim incipit illud caput, *Omnes sicutientes venite ad aquas, &c. et in eo legimus; quarite Dominum dum inveniri potest;* inde Dominus materiam differendi sumpsit; quod verisimile est saepius fecisse, in templo et in synagogis, ubi per singula Sabbathi legebantur sacri codices ex ordine. Id. ib. p. 325.

That remarkable expression, in administering the sacrament of the last Supper, *this is my body,* [Mat. xxvi. 26.] is no less evidently allusive to the *Paschal Lamb,* termed the *Lords Passover.* [Ex. xii. 11.] or the *Body of the Passover,* according to the Jewish form of celebrating this feast: [Majmon. Cham. Umat-sah,

tain Jews were massacred by the *Roman* governor in the midst of their devotions ; and that others had lately met with a no less untimely death by the fall of a tower in *Jerusalem* ; he guards his audience against the common vices of pride and censoriousness, in judging such as these to be the greatest sinners, because they were the most eminent sufferers ; and exhorts them all to repent of their own crimes, before the divine judgments overtook them ; which would shortly fall upon that People, and be the more distinguishable, as coming attended with the very same circumstances *. From *Herod's* late rashness in having led his army out to meet the king of *Arabia*, who came against him with superior forces, and defeated him † ; a lesson is laid down to all who entered on the Christian warfare, that they should first well weigh, and carefully compute the difficulties that attended it, before they were engaged in a matter of such

sah. c. 8. sect. i. et vii.] as likewise the words, *this is my Blood of the new Covenant ib. 28. or the new Covenant in my Blood,* [Luke xxii. 20.] are a manifest application of the very terms made use of in the institution of the old Covenant. Ex. xxiv. 8. Comp. Heb. ix. 22. That in the former instance, Christ accommodated himself to each minute circumstance of the Jewish ceremonial, as in taking up the bread with benediction, breaking, distributing it, &c. is shewn by *Ugolinus*, Dissert. de Rit. in Cœna Dom. ex *Antiq. Paschal.* illustrat. Thes. Ant. Saer. Vol. xvii.

* *Luke xiii. 1-5. οὐαύτως ανοίκους thus, in this manner, ye shall perish.* vid. *Grotius Doddridge, Whitby*, in loc. Comp. *Benson*, p. 381, 420.

† *Joseph. Ant. Jud. Lib. xix. c. 7. V. Newton on Dan.* p. 149. and Comp. *Whiston*, 6 Diff. p. 312.

such consequence †. From the robberies which were more particularly frequent in that age ‡ and place §; he forms a beautiful story of a certain traveller, who fell among thieves, was stripped, and wounded, and could find relief from none of his own country or persuasion; but met with it in one of those, from whom he had the least reason to expect any, as being so much used to despise and hate that people, and their way of worship *. From whence he forces his opponent to approve this amiable instance of humanity, even in the odious character of a *Samaritan*; and thereby shews him incontestably that the like good office would no less become a *Jew* in the like circumstances †. And from what happened about
that

† Luke xiv. 31.

‡ Joseph. Ant. Jud. Lib. xx. c. 6. Id. B. J. c. 5. & in Vit. p. 2, 3.

§ So many robberies and murders were committed on this road, which lay through a kind of wilderness between Jerusalem and Jericho; that Jerom tells us, it was called the bloody way, Doddr. on Luke x. 30. Comp. Poli Synops. or Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. in loc.

* That this notorious enmity between the *Jews* and *Samaritans* was then carried to the greatest height, at least by the former, appears wherever mention is made of the latter: vid. John viii. 48. Luke ix. 53. Eccl. l. 25. et Arnold, ibid. The consequence of such their enmity toward clearing and confirming those points wherein they agreed, is well drawn by Bossuet, Univ. Hist. p. 406, 417, &c.

† Luke x. 30, &c. Vid Clariæ. lib. v. 36. Concerning the Jewish interpretation of Lev. xix. 33. their limitation of the word neighbour, and our Lord's address in avoiding the imputation of directly opposing their established doctrine on that head; see Lamy Com. in Harm. p. 220. Prohibitum est eos (Gentiles) a morte liberare, si de morte periclitentur, &c. (comp. Lightf. in Luke x. 29.) Tam impiam doctrinam si prima fronte impetiisset Dominus,

that time, namely, that those, who obtained the kingdom of Judea, went to Rome to be confirmed in it; and on their return, called such to account as had been wanting in their duty, and took ample vengeance on those who rebelled against them, (which was the case under Archelaus, a few years before our Lord delivered that parable †;) he gives his followers to understand, that after he had ascended into heaven, and taken possession of his heavenly kingdom; he would come again in power and great glory, and not only punish that rebellious nation of the Jews, with exemplary judgments; but at length condemn all those who wilfully opposed his gospel; as well as those who continued to neglect and disregard it §. Such was our Saviour's constant method, that when ever men proposed to him any curious question, or related to him any particular fact or event, in expectation of having his observations upon it, he constantly turned the matter before him, into an occasion of giving some practical instructions, to the persons themselves with whom he was conversing *.—But

I pro-

Dominus, clamitasset legis-peritus cum traditionibus doctorum adverfari. Verum oculis subjiciens exemplum eximiae charitatis, quam legis-peritus non poterat non laudare, sic eum constringit, ut teneatur contrarium et saniorem doctrinam suo calculo comprobare. Comp. Doddr. in Luke x. 33.

† Joseph. Ant. Jud. Lib. xviii. c. 14, 15.

§ Luke xix. 12. Vid. Cleric. et Clarke in loc. or Harwood, Introd. to the N. Tes. c. 8. § 6.

* V. Clark's Serm. on Luke xiii. 2, 3. where several instances of this kind are produced.

I proceed with the general detail of his allusions to the things present, which is laid down by an excellent author, and though it may look like repeating some of the articles above, yet I trust the insertion of it here will be excused on account of the different applications made, and the variety of uses pointed out. “ In the Spring, our Saviour went into the fields, and sat down on a Mountain, and made that discourse which is recorded, in St. Matthew, and which is full of observations, arising from the things which offered themselves to his sight. For when he exhorted his disciples to trust in God, he bade them *behold* the fowls of the air; which were then flying about them, and were fed by Divine Providence, though they did not *sow* nor *reap*, nor *gather into barns*: He bade them, take notice of the Lillies of the field which were then blown, and were so beautifully clothed by the same Power, and yet toiled not like the husbandmen, who were then at work. Being in a place whence they had a wide prospect of a cultivated land, he bade them observe how God caused the Sun to shine, and the rain to descend upon the fields and gardens, even of the wicked and ungrateful: And he continued to convey his doctrine to them under rural images; speaking of good *trees*, and corrupt *trees*, of *wolves in sheep's clothing*, of grapes not growing upon thorns, nor figs on thistles, of the folly of casting precious things to dogs and swine; of good measure pressed down, and shaken together, and running

running over. Speaking at the same time to the people, many of whom were fishermen, and lived much upon fish, he says, *what man of you, will give his son a serpent, if he ask a fish?* Therefore when he said, in the same discourse, to his disciples, *ye are the light of the world; a City that is set on a Hill cannot be hid;* it is probable, that he pointed to a City within their view, situated upon the brow of a Hill. And when he called them the *salt of the earth,* he alluded perhaps to the husbandmen, who were manuring the ground; and when he compared every person who observed his precepts, to a man who built a house upon a rock, which stood firm; and every one who slighted his word, to a man who built a house upon the sand, which was thrown down by the winds and floods: When he used this comparison, 'tis not improbable that he had before his eyes, houses standing upon high ground, and houses standing in the valley, in a ruinous condition, which had been destroyed by inundations." *Jortin's Dis.* p. 213, &c. 2d Ed. Comp. *Benson,* p. 396.

Going from *Bethany* to *Jerusalem* with his disciples, as they passed over a Mountain, he said, *if ye shall say to this Mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done.* Matt. xxi. 21. When he says, *Luke xxii. 25. The kings of the Gentiles, exercise lordship over them, and they that exercise authority upon them, are called benefactors,* he alludes to

to the vanity of some wicked princes of those times, who deserved the title of robbers, much better than of benefactors, (vid. *Cleric* in loc.) When the woman of *Samaria*, (*John* iv.) wondered, that he should ask water of her, took occasion to represent his doctrine, under the image of *living water*, or water which flows from a spring. When he was by the sea-shore, *Matt.* xiii. he spake three parables to the people, concerning a sower; because it was then probably seed-time, as others have observed. At the time of the *passover*, alluding to it he says, *John* v. 24. He that heareth my word, ~~persecutionis~~ is passed from death unto life, (*Grot.*) When he speaks of the fig-tree, which had borne no fruit for three years, and was to be cut down, if it produced none the next year, he alluded perhaps to the time that he had spent in preaching to the *Jews*, as well as to their obstinacy, and to the punishment which would follow it.

Many more instances might be given, where *Christ* has formed his arguments and exhortations on such things as offered themselves to him; applying each most aptly to his present purpose: and where this does not so immediately appear, we have reason to believe it is chiefly owing to the omission of some circumstances in the history; as is observed by a very eminent writer (*). It may be farther observed, that

(*) See *Newt.* on *Dan.* p. 148. note a, where many of these instances of our Saviour's speaking *pro re rata* are produced. Comp.

that Christ, is no less easy and intelligible to his auditors, by alluding in a familiar way to all their customs, proverbs, maxims, &c. speaking always precisely in the character of a Jew, and in exact conformity, to what such understood ~~least~~^{best} and had been most used to ; what had been described or appointed in their sacred books. Thus he takes the very form of his first sermon on the Mount, from those *blessings* and *cursings* on two Mountains, the publishing whereof was enjoyned to the *Israelites*, upon their entrance into the Holy Land*. The same method he continues to the last, when on the cross he begins to repeat, or as it were, gives out, the 22d Psalm, which so very clearly describes the sufferings and death of the *Messiah*; which prophecy he was at that very time fulfilling, and thereby ascertaining and appropriating this character to himself †.

Hence, Lastly, we may observe, the necessity for a careful attention to the particular occasion, time
and

Comp. Lightfoot, Op. Lat. Vol. I. p. 146. on Matt. x. 29. Luke xii. 6.—p. 417. Matt. x. 9, 10.—p. 468. John iv. 35. et Vol. II. p. 45. Matt. xxi. 21.—p. 288. Matt. v. 24. Schoetgenii, Hor. Heb. p. 143. in Matt. xvi. 18. et John vi. 50. Bp. Hoadley's Serm on Matt. xi. 30. pr.

* [V. Deut. xxvii. 28. Josh. viii.) Matt. v. & Luke vi. 24. The manner of which solemnity has been described at large by some of their writers. V. Lightfoot on Matt. v. 3, 4. Op. T. 11. p. 20.

† Matt. xxvii. 46. Mark xv. 34. That a whole Psalm or Song, is sometimes referred to by reciting the first words of it, may be gathered from Exod. xv. 1, &c. compared with v. 21. ib. See Pilkington's Remarks, p. 129.

To which may be added, that his very last words, Luke xxiii. 46. *into thy hands I commend my Spirit*, are those of Ps. xxxi. 5.

and place ; as well as the situation, posture, gesture, &c. in which our Saviour spake, in order fully to comprehend the propriety, the force and beauty of his discourses ; which should remind us of the allowances that ought in justice to be made, for the seeming uncouthness, of some things in them at this day, and make us sensible of the value of those authors, who throw so much light on several passages of scripture, by endeavouring to supply them †.

And

† I shall beg leave to add an instance of this kind, where our blessed Saviour's conduct does not seem to have been sufficiently understood, for want of attending to the circumstance abovementioned. *John viii.* when the woman, said to be apprehended in adultery, is brought before our lord, merely with a malicious view of drawing him into a difficulty, whatever determination he should give ; v. 6. we find him *stooping down* and *writing on the ground*. Where it is observable that he does nothing, but in as exact conformity as the place would admit to the trial of the adulterous wife prescribed, by God in *Numb. v. 11* &c. where the priest was to stoop down, and take some of the dust from the floor of the tabernacle v. 17. and likewise write out the curses denounced upon that occasion. v. 23. By that act therefore Christ declares himself willing to take cognizance of this affair, if they were willing to abide the consequence : viz. according to their own traditions to be involved in the same curse if they proved equally guilty : on which account, this way of trial was abolished by the *Sanhedrim* about that very time, since that sin, say the Jews, grew then so very common. See *Lights.* on v. 3. It is like wise probable that Christ might by his countenance and gesture, shew these hypocrites how well he was aware both of their ill design in thus demanding judgement from him, and of their own obnoxiousness to the same punishment, which *Moses*'s law appointed for that crime ; and which, through a pretended zeal, they took upon themselves the power of executing, though they were no less guilty of the very same sin : as is most probably implied in his words to them, *John. viii. 7.* according to the interpretation of some late writers : (v. *Kypke Obs. Sac. in loc.*) and at the same time seeming to be so far otherwise employed ; as not to take any notice of their confusion when thus much was intimated to them, he gives them a fair opportunity

And thus did Christ, make every object and event serve for a constant monitor, and remembrancer of his instructions ; which by these means, must be the more easily apprehended, and retained, than they could be in any artificial method whatsoever §.

Again it is observable, that he delivered many things by way of *story*, or *parable*, a most engaging, and a most effectual method of instruction ; gradually informing, those who in reality were disposed for information, and not too violently disgusting those who were not*. This way of teaching, is of all

others

portunity to slip away (which they prudently laid hold of) ~~ere~~ here he proceeded any farther. The most probable account of our Saviour's stooping and writing, is that which is contained in an interpolation, as it is reckoned, at the end of the 8th verse in some copies, that what Christ wrote were the sins of the woman's accusers ; which how effectual it was to their shame and confusion, appeared from the event. *Worthington.* B. Lect. V. i. p. 180. *Imitabatur Christus ut quidam sentiunt, gestum sacerdotis, qui uxorem suspectam exploratrus se inclinabat, pulvremque a pavimento sanctuarii colligebat, quem aquæ infusum præberet fœminæ huic quæ suspecta erat. Judæi docent aquas Zelolypizæ non nocuisse uxori adulteræ, nisi ipse maritus insens esset. Adulter autem cum adultera pariter tumore ventris et putredine femoris corripiebantur. Maimon, in *Sotab.* c. 2. Hæc inter aniles Rabbinorum fabulas esse numeranda dicet quispiam.* Attamen constat testimonio *Josephi*, tum et sacri codicis, olim deum manifestis poenit occulta delicta puniisse. Dici ergo potest quod judicium Dei reveriti, quia a culpa forsan non erant immunes, excesserint scriba et pharisei omnes. *Lamy Harm.* p. 329. See the thing more at large in *Lighf.* on Joh. viii. 6. 9. and Vol. ii. p. 1080. A vindication of the authenticity of this whole passage, with an explanation of its several ends and uses, may be seen in *Benson's Dil.* on the subject, life of Christ p. 637. &c. Comp. *Worthington,* B. I. sect. V. i.

§ See Dr. Jeffery, referred to in not. †. p. 117. Ed. 6. And add *Cunning's Serm. on Matt. xi. 5. Scotch Preacher*, v. 1. p. 281, &c.

* See *Le Clerc*, Harm. p. 183. The same thing is elegantly described, and well applied by the author of *dialogues concerning education*,

leaving others most apt to raise, and to keep up the attention, and set each faculty of the mind on work : It gains the easiest admission into both head and heart ; it strikes the deepest ; sticks the longest ; gives the most delight ; by learning something, for the hearers themselves to discover ; and disobliges least, by putting them upon making their own application. On these accounts, it has been admired in all ages, and nations of the world ; and was particularly celebrated in the East (a). “ It was the custom of the wise men among the ancients, to cloth their instructions in apt stories and suitable comparisons ; this they did, at once to please and to instruct ; to excite men’s attention by gratifying their curiosity ; and to quicken their memory by entertaining their fancy * : Our Saviour took this method to recommend his weighty instructions, and make them sink deeper into the minds of his auditors. The same method was likewise proper for another

education, p. 363, &c. The like may be observed of the many figurative expressions, which our Saviour uses upon some occasions. See Claget upon Job. iv.

On the same account it was, in all probability, that he so generally chose to express himself in the very words of some ancient prophet, more especially in matters that were like to give offence, and to the same purpose it has been observed, that he never spoke in Parables at all, till the Jews had manifested such a wicked and perverse Spirit, as to ascribe his miracles to a confederacy with Beelzebub. Benson’s Life of Christ, c. 7. § 1, 2. An answer to the pretended obscurity of them may be seen, ib. § 3. p. 266, &c.

(a) Jerom on Matt. xiv. Whitby on Matt. xiii. 10. Nichols’s Conf. Vol. 1.

* As well as to prepare them occasionly, for a proper reproof and admonition, in the most effectual and least offensive way, by making themselves judges of such criminality in a parallel case.

another purpose, viz. to deliver some of the mysteries of the gospel with a degree of obscurity and reserve; which he did both to excite men's industry in searching further into the *deep things of God*, and withall to punish the sloth and negligence of those, who grudge taking any pains to learn God's will and their own duty; this reason, our Saviour himself assigns, why he speaks to the multitude in parables, *Matt. xiii. 10. &c.** Among many other excellent uses to which *Christ* applied this method; in a manner the most delicate and masterly, it was peculiarly fitted to insinuate such points, as more immediately opposed the inveterate prejudices, or depraved inclinations, of all those to whom he preached; and which, though necessary for them to be apprised of, so far as might help afterwards to reconcile their thoughts to these things, when they were able to recollect that they had been intended, and foretold from the beginning; yet were not at that time to be laid down in a more open, direct manner; such as related chiefly to the external circumstances of his person and doctrine; and the effects thereof, upon both *Jew and Gentile*.†

As to the fundamental parts of his religion and his manner of declaring them; both these were easy and obvious, such as the weakest and most ignorant (unless

* *Loveth Dir.* p. 185. Comp. *Jaquelot de la verite, &c.* p. 318. *Lamy. Harm.* 248. 253. *Lightfoot in Matt. xiii. 3. 05 Harm. c. 31. § 37.*

† *Vid. Jaquelot, p. 319, &c.*

(unless affectedly so) could not mistake; and proposed in that plain, popular way to which they were the most accustomed, and in which they would be most likely to apprehend him: The *Eastern* writers are well known to abound with brief maxims; parabolic or proverbial expressions; and extremely popular forms of speech †: In which such a dry, way of reasoning and discoursing; such a minute detail of circumstances and restraining clauses, as is in use with us, would have been little relished or regarded; and which style of theirs might be easily justified in point of certainty and perspicuity; since to one who is tolerably well acquainted with it, the main drift lies commonly very obvious under all these strong and significant, however highly figurative, and bold expressions; nor is there any great difficulty in supplying all the proper qualifications, which of course arise in every subject; and will have an allowance made for them so long as either common sense, or common equity and candour is admitted. And it is worth remarking, that wherever *Christ's* words seem capable of different senses, we may conclude that to be the true one, which lay most level to the comprehension of his auditors; allowing for those figurative expressions which were so very frequent and familiar with them, and which therefore are no exceptions to this general rule, this necessary canon of interpretation, which of all others, I think wants most to be recommended.

The

† Vid. Assize Serm. at *Carlisle*, on *Matt.* v. 40. 1743.

The bulk of his doctrine was purely practical, always highly pertinent to the case in hand, and of an immediate and apparent tendency to the most beneficial purposes: and he is so far from seeking reputation by an artfull and elaborate manner of explaining it; that he seems barely to propose each point, together with its proper sanction and leaves it to shine forth by its own light. 'Tis neither versed in any nice, subtle speculations, nor involved in pompous paradoxes, nor adorned with flowers of rhetoric. We find it free from all ostentatious and unnatural flights, as well as from that load of superstitious rites, and slavish ceremonies, which encumbered every other system: consisting of solid and substantial duties; containing general comprehensive rules to try them by; and grounded on such never failing principles of action, as must enable his disciples to determine for themselves, and judge aright in each particular case; as for instance, in that of the *sabbath*; which, like all other solemnities, was instituted for the sake of man; and therefore should be made subservient to his good *; and in that, to the glory of his Maker, which are inseparable from each other. In *meats* and *drinks*, and every thing, by consequence, of the same kind†; which, as being merely external things, must likewise be of an in-different nature; and therefore could not of themselves defile a

man

* *Mark* ii. 27. Vid *Cleric.*

† *Col.* ii. 21.

man†. In that of *oaths*, the several kinds whereof were all really of the same import, as including the same virtual appeal to God; and therefore must needs be of equal force, and should alike exclude all fraudulent, evasive artifices *||*. In that of *vows*, which bind only to things otherwise innocent at least, and by which none ever could exempt themselves from duties of a prior, and perpetual obligation *§.* In that of *contracts*, which confer a strict right to the thing contracted for; more especially the great, general one of *matrimony*, which ought not to be rashly violated by either party, or dissolved for any cause less than such an one as must prove inconsistent with the very foundation and original end thereof, v. g. fornication or *adultery**. And by that universal rule, of *mercy* being preferable to *sacrifice*, whenever a *moral* and a *positive* precept interfere with one another *†.*

Such doctrine must appear, not only excellent in itself, and taken independently; but more especially so, in the circumstances under which it was delivered: As fully obviating the several false maxims, and fallacious glosses, advanced by the *Jewish* teachers of our Saviour's time: in which respect it must be

doubly

‡ *Matt. xv. 18. Mark vii. 15.* See *Lights. Harm.* p. 237.

|| *Matt. xxiii. 16, &c.*

§ *Matt. xv. 6. Mark. vii. 11.*

* *Matt. v. 32, &c.* compared with *1 Cor. vii. 15.* and *Wolf. ib. Vol. III. p. 407.* That this should be understood, rather as a capital instance, of such an inconsistency, than as the sole restraining clause of a divorce, vid. *Kypke, Obs. Sacr. vol. i. p. 25. Pool in loc. p. 166, 167.* or *Whitby, on 1 Cor. vii. 15.*

† *Matt. ix. 13. xii. 7.*

doubly useful, as an instruction in several truths of the last importance, and a guard against so many popular errors ; and may be considered, as another instance of his exquisite manner of accomodating things, both to the general benefit of mankind, and the particular exigencies of his hearers.

Lastly, our Saviour's way of arguing, must carry something of a peculiar force and poignancy along with it, and be attended with extraordinary degrees both of conviction, and astonishment ; as he knew thoroughly *what was in man*, and therefore could speak to his heart directly † ; as he saw into the most secret thoughts, and purposes, of all those whom he had to deal with ; and often shewed them plainly that he did so, by removing the latent prejudices of his weaker friends, ~~and~~ obviating the doubts and difficulties, as they arose in their own minds ; before they durst give utterance to them § : By answering such objections as had been made only in private, or out of his hearing || : By refuting every plausible pretence,

† *Matt.* ix. 4. xii. 25. *Mark* xi. 5. ix. 33. 34. 35. *Luke* v. 22. vi. 8. ix. 47. xi. 17. *John* vi. 61. 70. xvi. 6. 30. See other instances in *Clagett* on *John* vii. 33. 34. *Lamy*, *Harm.* on *John* v. 14. p. 272. *Benson*, *Life of Christ*, c. 5 sect. xi. 3. And *Lightfoot* on *John* i. 48.—*Harm.* p. 535.

§ Comp. *John* xvi. 19, 30. et *Cleric.* in *John* xi. 22.

|| This seems to have been the case in *John* vii, 15, 16.—~~xviii.~~ 28. and many other places, why that circumstance is not expressed. Comp. *Luke* xxii. 61. See *Benson's Life of Christ*, c. 5. § iv. and § xi. where several texts are explained by the consideration of Jesus, his knowing the hearts of men ; and that he could talk to their thoughts as we do to another's words or actions.

tence, and laying open the most artful stratagems of his subtle adversaries ; detecting their hypocrisy, exposing their true aim ; and thereby cutting off all possibility of reply : On which account, his word must needs be *quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword.*—In this respect, it might well be said, *never man spake like this man.* Many instances whereof will occur upon a diligent perusal of the **Gospels***.

Thus did *Christ*, live and teach ; shewing himself superior to the rest of the world, as much in each of these respects, as he was in his miracles.

There was an extraordinary man among the *Greeks*, who has often been compared to *Christ*, there being a resemblance between them, in some very remarkable particulars. *Socrates*, like *Christ*, lays out all his time, in going about to admonish, and reform his countrymen ; which he assures them, was a *ministry enjoined him by the Deity*, for their benefit, to whom he supposes himself *given, or sent by God* ; with the utmost firmness, bearing all the injuries, and despising the affronts, to which he was continually exposed on that account. He frequently resorts to places of public concourse, and generally

grounds

actions. Comp. Dr. *Harwood's* new Introd. to the N. T. c. 8. § 1. Where many ingenious observations, occur to the same purpose.

* The argument from thence in favour of Christianity, may be seen in *Bourn's Discourses, on the Parables*, V. 3. Serm. 4. p. 6. &c,

grounds his discourses on what occurs there, making use of every place, and season, and occasion, to exercise and inculcate his philosophy. He chooses a state of poverty, to clear himself from all suspicion of any private interest, and make his character more unexceptionable, by shewing that he himself, practised what he taught * : He avoids meddling with the affairs of the public ; declines posts of authority amongst his fellow citizens ; such ^{as} in those bad times, must have precipitated his fate, before he had done them any considerable service. He perseveres in sifting and examining their prejudices, in order to detect their ignorance and presumption †, and to mortify their pride, on all occasions, and declares that he must persevere in the same course ‡, even when he clearly foresaw, that the loss of his life would certainly attend it § : nay, that he would continue this course, though he were to die ever so often for it. When merely out of *envy*, he is delivered up to his enemies, and on a most malicious prosecution brought to his trial, instead of having recourse to the usual way of supplication, and applying to the passions of his judges ; he proves to them, that they ought not to admit of any such application ; he informs

* Vid. *Plutarch Advers. Colet. Op. Vol. II.*

⁶ Xenoph. Mem. Lib. iv. Fin.

forms their reason, and appeals to their consciences ; and proceeds so far in his own defence, as would be just sufficient to assert his *innocence*, and shew them the great *sin* of persecuting and oppressing it.

Instead of using, or permitting, any other means to avoid his death, he signifies that it was free, and voluntary in him, because it had become necessary for the world ; and meets the instruments thereof, with the utmost calmness and serenity.

He left none of his philosophy in writing, but took good care, as he said, to imprint it deeply in the hearts of his disciples, which some of them delivered down to us, ; [though in a manner very different from that simplicity, and strict propriety, with which the gospels are recorded] and, indeed, the effects which his instructions and example, had upon them, were prodigious ||.

Some other circumstances might be pointed out, were we to draw a parallel between them, considered as public teachers. But notwithstanding any such, and without derogating from the character of *Socrates* ; we still may affirm, that he was far surpassed by *Christ* ; as well in the importance of the doctrines taught by him, as in the candid, clear, convincing manner of delivering them ; and in that purity and general perfection, which distinguish *Christianity* from every other system of Religion.

From

¶ Vid. Charpentier Life of Socr.

From these slight strictures on a character justly reputed one of the most upright and complete among mere men; when it is placed in opposition to that of *Christ* our Lord, 'tis easy to distinguish which has the advantage*; as is freely owned by some modern unbelievers †. The same thing would appear more clearly, were the latter to be drawn out at large; and exhibited together with any other of the most celebrated legislators or Professors of philosophy. But such a comparative view seems to be little necessary to its illustration.

And I content myself with only touching on some few of those remarkable circumstances in the life of *Jesus*, which were recorded by his first disciples, as the evidences of his being the Son of God; which brought such multitudes to believe on him at that time, and which one would think sufficient to produce the same belief in every age; as they have actually done, both with the generality wherever they have been fairly offered to them; and with the best, and wisest men, who have given themselves leave duly to reflect upon them.

* This may be seen at large in *Macknight's* truth of the Gospel History.

† See the parallel in *Rousseau's* Treatise on Education, and Voltaire's Essay on Toleration, c. 14.

From these trials, difficulties, and afflictions, Jesus
learned one of the most valuable lessons of life, — that
the more we suffer, the more we grow; — that
God can do more for us than we can do for ourselves;
that we must always be ready to meet our trials with
confidence, and that we must always trust in God; — that
we must always be ready to help others, and that
we must always be ready to forgive others; — that
we must always be ready to serve God, and that
we must always be ready to obey His commands.

Jesus had now completed his ministry, and was ready to return to his Father. He had taught many thousands of people, and had performed many miracles. He had also suffered much pain and trouble, but he had always been faithful to his Master, and had never failed to do his duty. Now, as he stood on the mountain top, looking down upon the world, he knew that he had done his Master's will, and that he had fulfilled all the promises which he had made to him. He was ready to leave the world, and to go back to his Father, where he would be happy forever.

As Jesus stood on the mountain top, he looked out over the world, and saw many people who were suffering and in need. He knew that he could not leave them, and that he must stay with them until they were better. So he turned to his disciples, and said to them, "Come with me, and I will take you to see my Father, and we will stay there until you are better."

The disciples were very glad to hear this, and they followed Jesus up the mountain, and stayed there until they were better.

When Jesus had finished his stay on the mountain, he returned to the city, and continued his work among the people.

He taught in the synagogues, and healed the sick, and helped the poor, and gave hope to the hopeless.

He was a great teacher, and a wonderful healer, and a true friend to all who needed him.

He died at last, but his spirit lives on, and his teachings continue to inspire and comfort people everywhere.

THE
NATURE and END
OF
DEATH
UNDER THE
CHRISTIAN COVENANT.

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C.P.

THE
NATURE and END of *DEATH*,
UNDER THE
CHRISTIAN COVENANT.

HEB. II. 14, 15.

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage.

THE author of this epistle had in the foregoing part of it been proving, that both Christ, who sanctifieth the world, and they who are sanctified by him, were brethren; of the same seed, and alike children of the promise wherein *all the nations of the earth* were to be blessed: whence he infers, *forasmuch then as the children* [mankind in general] *are partakers of flesh and blood* [or mortal by nature;] *he also*, who was to be the captain of their salvation, *must likewise take part of the same*, and suffer in it; that he might not only shew them, how death was to be

over-

overcome in this very nature; but actually procure an abolition of it;—that by submitting to this for a while himself, *Jesus* might for ever rescue all his brethren from it; and at length raise them to the same state of glory which he now enjoys:—That it was a work highly worthy of infinite wisdom and goodness; or (as the apostle says) *became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory*, to make this wonderful humiliation of their head a necessary step thereto; that *he [Christ] by the grace of God*, or through the love of the Father †, *should taste death for every man*; and thereby, as it is in a parallel place ‡, *deliver the whole creation from the bondage of corruption, under which they had groaned, and travelled in pain together until now*; and thus defeat and vanquish our great adversary, who had so long subjected us to such a state of vanity, and wretchedness; and finally exalt the world to the highest degree of happiness and perfection, by that very thing, which had been introduced in order to debase and ruin it. Thus, by once undergoing this last evil incident to our frame, he has taken off its force; and gained a final victory over it: this death is now disarmed of its terrors; and man delivered from that servile, abject state of anxiety, to which the ancient heathen were, and *we must have been unavoidably reduced*; as being
con-
† *Joh. iii. 16.*

[‡] Rom. viii. 22. Comp. Heb. ii. 14, 15. A continual apprehension of being for ever under the dominion of Death, is the bondage or slavery here mentioned. Sykes, ib.

constantly sensible of its continual approaches towards us ; and having no prospect of being ever freed from its dominion over us.—This is the true import of that great *great salvation*, we obtain through *Jesus Christ*; which, whenever it is well understood in the world, will be judged *worthy of all acceptation*: In order to which, let us take a farther view of this important subject ; which I propose to consider more distinctly, under the following heads of enquiry :

I. In what sense we are *delivered from death* by the sufferings and death of Christ.

II. Why so much of the *power of death* is still permitted to continue in the world.

III. What *notions* of it are now proper and agreeable to the *Christian state*.

I. In what sense are we delivered from death by the sufferings and death of Christ ?

In order to determine this, it will be necessary to attend to the true meaning of the word *death*, as it is strictly and properly applied in Scripture : and this may be best seen, by looking back to the remarkable passage where it is first used, in that denunciation which brought *Adam* and his posterity under it ; and where we must suppose it used in all the plainness, and propriety of speech imaginable †. And accordingly, we find the original here §, as full and emphatic

† Gen. ii. 17.

§ יְמִינָה נֶפֶשׁ Comp. Gen. xxxvii. 33. Ex. xxi. 19. where the same construction signifies entirely, totally. See this farther confirm'd in Taylor, Script. Div. Ch. ix. p. 104.

tical as words can make it. They are translated, Thou shalt surely,—but might with more strictness have been rendered, Thou shalt utterly die. ||. Which one would think sufficiently explained in the sentence passed on our first parents; where they are reminded of their original, and of that condition to which this change should reduce them. *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.* Now what do we imagine they could possibly understand by this denunciation, but a resumption of that natural life or conscious being, which their Creator had been lately pleased to confer? the forfeiting which must necessarily include a loss of all those benefits, that then did, or ever could proceed from him. This surely, and nothing less, must be implied in that most solemn sentence: nor can we well conceive the unhappy subjects of it, to have been at that time so very ingenious, as to explain it away, by distinguishing upon the several component parts of their constitution; and concluding, that by death no more was intended, than only a separation of these parts, while the principal of them

|| Athanasius thinks, that the doubling the expression denotes Μη μονος απεθνησει, αλλα και ει τη τη θανατη φθορη διαμυνει. [L. de Incarn. verbi.] He should not only die; but remain in the corruption of death; as we should all have done, had not the second Adam obtained for us an happy resurrection. Vid. Patrick on Gen. ii. 17. with Taylor's Scheme of Script. Div. p. 104. And more especially, Ibbot's Serms. Vol. 3. f. xxx.. p. 182—3—4.

was still living in some different manner ; or that it was a continuation of their consciousness, and real existence, though in some other place. No : this was the philosophy of after ages : concerning which, all I shall say at present is, that some of its most eminent patrons cannot help observing, that they *don't find it in the Scriptures* (z.) These, in their obvious meaning, represent the *whole man*, individual, person, or being ; as included in the sentence here addressed to him ; nor do they take notice of any other circumstance in the case, beside that, so often mentioned, of his returning to the *dust, or ground from whence he was taken* * : and might not the first pair as well expect,

(z) *Tillotson*, Vol. II. fol. Serm. 100.—This is very tenderly expressed ; and the reason that great author gives for it, not unsuitable to the prejudices of his time : whereas if he had considered the point more fully, I presume, he would have found the Scripture, not taking *this natural immortality* for granted ; as he imagines, but rather laying down *the contrary* ; and the New Testament every where insisting on it, as the very ground of the whole Christian covenant ; through which alone, we attain to *immortality, or everlasting life*. In order to form a better judgment of this, we should carefully examine the Scripture-language ; and see what all those several terms, and phrases may imply in the original, which are supposed to include the doctrine above-mentioned : For which, see the APPENDIX.

* *Gen. iii. 23.* ‘ As the threatening was only in general, *Thou shalt die* ; and it does not appear by the history, that man had any notice given him of a *spiritual death*, (or the necessity of *sinning*) nor of *eternal death*, (i. e. a necessity and eternity of *torment*) so it would seem surprising, if it had not been often said by some men, (which was yet never proved by any) that death, natural, spiritual, and eternal, was threatened. *Jeffery, Select. Dis. p. 22.* ‘ When *Adam* was told that if he offended he should die, he could not then understand by Death a future punishment after Death, but rather an annihilation of his soul, and a dissolution of his

pect, that the same *breadth of life*, which the Lord God had breathed into their nostrils ; whereby man became a living soul ; should still survive the execution of that sentence ; or that the dust itself should praise God ; as that any kind of knowledge of, or communion with him, should continue in that state of darkness, and destruction, to which they were then doomed ?

Thus did death enter into the world, and reign in it, through that *one transgression*.—Let us in the next place see how this reign is destroyed ; and we delivered from it by the *obedience* of our Lord :

Which will appear more clearly, from the date of that deliverance ; and this is every where represented in the same Scripture, as commencing at the *resurrection* ; nor can any thing else constitute the full opposition above-mentioned : for if death be a return to *dust* ; then nothing but a *reviving*, or a *resuscitation* from that dust, can be the reversing of it ; or a proper recovery from it : and accordingly, to this, and this alone, St. Paul confines the contrast, he has drawn at large, between the first and second *Adam*. Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead ; and as in Adam all die ;

his body, and a returning to the same insensibility from which he had been called into being.' *Jortis, Serm.* Vol. VII. p. 283. How the same learned Author could elsewhere adopt the contrary doctrine, and make it the burden of his discourses, as he seems to have done, is somewhat surprising. *

die ; even so in Christ shall all be made alive †; which life is, not an inherent property of our original nature ; but a free gift to us ‡, promised, and procured by Christ ; and accordingly termed the grace, or gift
of

† Which words, (as a very competent judge of Scripture-language has assured us) directly affirm, ‘ that a resurrection, or being made alive again, is granted, assured, and executed, by, and in Christ alone ; and evidently suppose, 1. That the dead are not made alive, till the resurrection ; for the resurrection of the dead, and being made alive, are here expressions of the same signification. 2. That, had not a resurrection been provided, we should never after death have been made alive.’ Taylor’s Script. Doctr. of Orig. Sin, p. 24. Comp. Doddridge on Job. iii. 15. Fam. Expos, Vol. I. p. 154. and Jeffery Select Disc. p. 64.

The same thing is very properly termed by Bishop Sherlock [Disc. ii. p. 76.] a calling men from the grave into being ; or the making dead bodies into living men ; p. 300. which second creation of all men, by our blessed Saviour, his lordship justly parallels to the calling them out of nothing at the first creation ; or the restoring to them that life, which he at first gave ; ib. or the calling man into life again, out of the same state of dust, and ashes, from which he was at first formed a living soul. ib. Disc. vi. p. 209.

Add Id. Disc. Vol. II. p. 207. ‘ He—goes down—to the grave, and his iniquities follow him ; and will rise with him again, when God calls him to appear and answer for himself.’ ib. p. 278. The fear of death can be allayed by nothing, but the hope of living again ;—death is a sleep from which we expect to wake to immortality.—The same notion is consistently pursued by his lordship ; Use and Intent of Propb. p. 69, 75, 91, 93, 116, 118, 142, 143, 239, 240. 2d Edit.

That nothing else but this compound being, which is wholly destroyed by death, and whose constituent parts are renewed at the resurrection, can with any propriety, be denominated man : see in the same eminent writer, ib. p. 86.—What insurmountable difficulties have arisen from considering these constituents separately, may be seen, ib. p. 101, &c.

‘ Tis something surprising to think, that a mere rational mind should be the same individual with a man, who consists of a rational mind, a sensitive soul, and a body. This carries no probability with it at first sight ; and reason cannot undertake much in its behalf. ib. Disc. p. 204.

† John v. 40. vi. 33, 51, 57. x. 10, 28. xiv. 6, 19. xvii. 2, 22. 1 John ii. 25. v. 11, 12, 13.

of God, and the gift by grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord § : who on that account is pleased to stile himself *the resurrection and the life* || ; who is called *our life** ; and said to have *the keys of hades and of death* ; who opens for us the true and only way to immortality, through the gate of the *resurrection* ; and without whom there is no admission to it ; but *the wrath of God abideth on us* †. So far is it from truth, that immortal life may be discovered by the light of nature ; that on the contrary, we are taught to believe, it was Christ only, who *abolished death, and brought immortality to light*, (or revealed it,) by his *Gospel* :—that the heathens, ignorant of this, *have no hope* ; or no *ground* for their hope ‡ ; and that if there were no resurrection, the very best of men, even they who are *fallen asleep in Christ, are perished* **. But now Christ being himself risen from the dead, and thereby become *the first-fruits of them that slept* ; we are as certain of our own resurrection, as that he our head is

risen

§ Rom. v. 14, 15, 16, 17. vi. 23. viii. 2. The resurrection of the dead, through, or in Jesus, Acts iv. 2. 1 Cor. xv. 22, 57.

1 Pet. iii. 7.

|| John xi. 25.

* Col. iii. 4.

† John iii. 36.

‡ ‘ Scholars may reason of the nature of the Soul, and the condition of it when separated from the body ; but the common hopes of nature receive no support from such inquiries.’ Bp. Sherlock, Disc. ii. p. 85. We die and moulder to dust ; and in that state, what we are, or where we are, nature cannot say. Id. ib. Vol. IV. p. 79.

** The true import of this phrase, and the argument from it, is well established by Alexander, Paraphr. on 1 Cor. xv. p. 28, &c.

risen for us. Hereby we become *children*, or *heirs of the resurrection*; and have an infallible title to *immortal life*, through this *adoption*; that is, the *redemption of our body**. We now know, that we shall not *perish for ever*† be finally *lost*; but live in him; or (as he himself constantly explains it) be raised up again *at the last day*‡. We may *with boldness approach to God, by a living way, which Christ hath consecrated to us through the veil*; that is, *his flesh*: through him we have gained the *victory*; may join in St. Paul's triumph over *death and the grave*§; and have infinite reason to express our gratitude for it, with the same good apostle; *thanks be to God, who giveth us this victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ*. But,

2dly, If death be vanquished, why then doth so much of its *power* still subsist in the world? Why is this *pause* permitted in the course of our existence; and life dropt awhile, in order to be resumed? How comes it to pass, that we don't rather *live on*; than die, and rise again?—and in what manner shall we be revived? as some distinguish the two questions of St. Paul||, by the distinct answer,

* Rom. viii. 23.

+ John x. 28.

‡ John iii. 16.—vi. 39, 40, 44.

§ 1 Cor. xv. 55.

|| 1 Cor. xv. 35. Πως ἐγενότας οἱ νεκροὶ; *Why are dead men raised to life again?* or how is it that such persons shall be recalled into being who now are as if they had never been? See *Locke* on the place, note b. who seems to have given the first hint of adjusting the above queries to their distinct replies; though we are sorry to observe a piece of confusion in the same note, very uncom-

fwer, which he gives to each, *viz.* that in the common course of nature here, the decay and dissolution of things precedes a reviviscence [*that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die;*] — that such a change of states is no less necessary; and—that it would be as *foolish* to expect the contrary in this case; as to expect that seed-corn should grow up, without any of that alteration in its texture, which is occasioned by the change of seasons * and situation.

Let us proceed then, to enquire into the propriety of our either living on still in the present state, or being removed into some other, without such a change as death produces.

As to the former, 'tis plain, that in what state soever mankind were originally made, they could not have subsisted always in the present world; at least, not been supported in such numbers, as now take

uncommon to that accurate writer, occasioned by his inverting the order of the same answers just after he had stated them, and thereby appearing to postpone the 36th verse to those that follow. Other commentators are forced to admit the two fold question, yet in handling the first, either run it into a foreign enquiry about the *possibility* of the thing, or sink it into the second, as wholly relative to the *manner* of effecting it. That the word *πως* may with equal propriety be rendered *why*, as well as *how* will appear sufficiently from the parallel places, *Matt.* xvi. 11. xxii. 12. *Mark* iv. 40. viii. 21, &c. in which passages it seems to bear the very same sense as *δια τι*, and in several others both of the N. T. and other writers, when it is used interrogatively.

* Comp. *John* xiii. 24.

take their turn there, in succeeding generations †: the inhabitants of this globe then must have been confined to a few individuals: or these been frequently removed, both to make room for others, and by way of advancement to themselves; without any of that pain or perturbation, anxiousness or dread, which usually precedes or attends the conclusion of their present life.—How far this might have been the case, had man continued, as he came out of the hand of his Creator, holy and innocent, we cannot easily say; but are very sure, that when this innocence was lost; when sin had entered, and evil habits spred and propagated themselves in the world; men were neither fit to live in it, as long as they pleased; nor to be removed out of it in such a way, as might seem most agreeable to them; but rather were to be held in a more rigorous state of duty and dependence; in order to induce them to preserve themselves and others, their due time, in existence here; as also put them on the most effectual means of attending to, and making some provision for a better state.

If after a long life spent idly in this world, each of us were sure of being lightly removed into some other region; we should in all probability be no
more

† Δος αλλοις τοπον διε γην και αλλας, καθιστερ και συ ερειν, και γενομενες εχειν χωραν, και οικησιν, και τα εκπιθειν. Αν δ' οι πρωτοι μη ιπτηκυνοι, τι ιπτολεπτεις; Arrian, Epictet. Diss. p. 558. Edit. Upton, 1741.

more concerned about it, than at taking a journey into some foreign country: Or could we at any time, without either pain, or the apprehension of any, quit our abode here, and convey ourselves to the realms above; how ready on every slight occasion would each be to dispatch himself, or others thither! how rashly would they rush into their Maker's presence, however unfit and unprepared to meet him! Or must the sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth be obliged to send his messengers (as he did for *Elijah*) to conduct us thither, whenever we may be disposed to change our station? This must appear no less indecent and incongruous; neither more worthy of the Divine Majesty; nor better suited to the nature of man: who, though he be endowed with large capacities, considering whence he sprang so lately; and placed in so high a rank in the order of creatures, several classes of which are entirely subjected to him; yet is he at his best estate, of but a very limited understanding; and by no means qualified to have the absolute disposal of himself; or to be fully let into the manner, how he is to be disposed of in the next world; all which were he at present able to comprehend, he would in all probability make no proper use of that knowledge: but be rather apt to pervert it to some evil purpose.

It might be necessary therefore to have such a vail drawn over the whole, as is now done by death; while man is fixed here for some time, in a state of discipline

discipline and probation; under general laws, to be foreseen, and in some measure influenced by himself; and of which therefore he may avail himself so far, as to enjoy a good degree of present happiness; as well as render himself meet, for some superior station, when he shall be called to it. Here he is first produced, and formed to act a part upon this present stage; a short one indeed, but such as may in general be sufficient to constitute a real character; and lay a just foundation for eternity: then the scene closes in so severe and solemn a manner, as must, if any thing can alarm him; and excite some more than ordinary vigorous endeavours to prepare for his appearance in the next state; which is of infinite importance, and opens with a public trial; when all persons shall be gathered from all quarters of the world, and *stand together before the judgment-seat of Christ;* at once to receive their doom for all things done in the body, at what ever distance of time, to which doom their respective deaths consigned them.

Farther; Such a dispensation as this of death, however disagreeable it may some times appear to us, is yet in our present circumstances of great and general service; and the apprehension of it absolutely necessary for the government of mankind, considered either, as in a state of natural culture, and training up for society with one another here; or, in order to prepare them for a higher degree of moral happiness,

ness, and mutual fellowship with Saints and Angels hereafter. The frequent warnings of it are of no less use, to check the enormous growth of wealth and power, in any particular stage, or member of it; and thereby cut off the very extensive views, and curb the hardy attempts, of arbitrary and aspiring men:—to keep the balance even among the higher orders, and prevent that tyranny and oppression, which would naturally attend the long projected schemes of overthrowing it;—to restrain the exorbitant degrees of vice and villainy in those of lower stations, by the various terrors which attend the prospect of it; and by its visible infliction;—to correct the follies of intemperance, and abandoned lust, by bringing their sad effects so frequently to view;—by being the most powerful means of breaking wrong associations, and reforming evil habits; since this is the very strongest and most general alarm, raised and collected from all quarters of our constitution *;—by putting us upon rousing ourselves from sloth and supine negligence, and recollecting what a precarious state we are in;—by preventing our being ever wholly immersed in the low cares, and sunk under the load of any crosses and calamities of this same transitory life:—helping us to raise our thoughts and expectations to a better; and enabling us to keep them more steady and intent upon it;—to fix our hearts there,

* See Hartley's *Essay on Man*, Vol. I. p. 466.

there, where our real treasure lies ; and whither we are in so sensible a manner, daily hastening [H].

These are very obvious considerations on the subject of the divine œconomy, in suffering death, and the general apprehensions of it, to prevail in such a world as ours. Nor are there perhaps others of less moment,

[B] ‘ In general, to all mankind *death* is no small benefit, as it increaseth the vanity of all earthly things, and so abateth their force to tempt and delude ; hath a tendency to excite sober reflections ; to induce us to be moderate in gratifying the appetites of a corruptible body ; to mortify pride and ambition ; and to give a due sense of our dependence upon God. And when death, at too great a distance, was not sufficient generally to gain these important ends ; when mankind abused a life prolonged near a thousand years, to universal excess, and violence ; [Gen. vi. 12, 13.] God was pleased after the deluge, to vary this dispensation, by shortening our days ; and gradually reducing them to threescore and ten, or fourscore years. And if the degeneracy of the *Antediluvians* were the occasion of this reduction of human life, (as seems most probable) then it will be true, that as *DEATH entered into the world by Adam's sin*, so the *HASTENING of death*, or shortness of life, *tame upon all men*, by the sin of that vicious generation ; and by their *disobedience*, we are all again so far *made sinners* ; not as a punishment for their crimes, but, in mercy and goodness : That the wild range of ambition and lust, might be reduced to narrower bounds, and have less opportunity of doing mischief ; and that death, being brought still nearer to our view, might be a more powerful motive to regard less the things of a transitory world, and to attend more to the rules of truth and wisdom.—Thus I judge of the present shortness of life ; and we cannot err much, if we think that God, upon occasion of *Adam's sin*, constituted our life frail, laborious, and sorrowful ; and at length concluded by death : not to punish us for another man's sin ; but to lessen temptation, and to promote our spiritual good : For in several places the Scripture directly affirms, that affliction and suffering is the chastisement of our Heavenly FATHER ; and particularly applies our common *mortality* to the forementioned good purposes. See *Psal. xxxix, xl ix, xc. Eccles. i, ii, &c.*’ *Taylor's Script. Doctr. of Orig. Sin*, p. 67. &c.,

moment, which conduce to the same end by making it *naturally fit*, and necessary, for such disordered and corrupted bodies as we bear about us, to be totally dissolved ; in order to eradicate those various *traces*, which may have been formed in them, by inveterate *associations* ; and which perhaps could not otherwise have been reversed ; even on the most sincere resolution of returning to a better conduct : that so, *sin* might not be *immortal in our bodies* ; but these being new moulded, and thoroughly refined and rectified ; might become more commodious habitations, for the *spirits of just men made perfect* ;—might be changed from *natural bodies* to *spiritual*. And if such change be necessary, as we are taught, by the best authority to believe it is* ; it seems to be but of small consequence *when*, or *in what manner* this be made ; whether we are to *sleep* first, or be found like those of the last generation : since the times of our dying and rising again are, in reality, *coincident*† ; and our change either way, alike *momentary* : nor will it be any more to us than *the twinkling of an eye* ; neither shall *those that remain unto the coming of the Lord*, prevent us who were fallen *asleep* ; or enter into *the joy of their Lord* before us ; but both we and they shall, *at the sound of the last trump*, be caught up together, to meet the *Lord in the air*, and so be ever with him ‡.

But

* *1 Cor. xv. 50,*

† See *Taylor on Rom.* p. 334.

‡ *1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.* *1 Thess. iv. 15, &c.*

But how many uses soever may be assigned for such a dispensation as this of death; we are still to remember, that it must be but an imperfect sketch, of some few of those various ends, that are contain'd in this great plan of providence; whereof so very small a part at present lies before us; a more complete display of which, will probably constitute no inconsiderable portion of our future happiness, when *we shall know, even as we ourselves are known*; when our *whole spirit, soul, and body, shall be presented blameless, at the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*.

Which brings me to consider,

3dly, What *notions* of death are now proper, and agreeable to the Christian state.

Now this results from, and has been in a good degree anticipated under the foregoing heads.

For if among the heathen, whom our apostle points out in the latter part of the text, the great dread of death, and that perpetual bondage consequent thereon, arose from their surveying it as the last evil, which puts a period to their whole existence; [many of them contending that it did so [Θ]]; and

[Θ] *Æsch.* *Eumen.* v. 655. *Eurip.* *Troad.* v. 487, 631, &c. *Mosch.* Ep. *Bion.* v. 100—105. *Catull.* 5. 6. *Lucret.* 3. 842, &c. 987, &c. *Lucan Lib.* iii. v. 39, 40. vii. v. 470, 471. viii. v. 395, 396. *Sen. Trag. Tro. A.* 2. Chor. *Ces. et Cat.* in *Sal.* c. 51, 52. *Cic. pro Clu.* c. 61. *Comp.* id. sup. p. 122. n. [B] *Plin. N. H.* *Lib.* iii c. 7. ib. vii. c. 56. *Sen. Ep.* 54, 71, 99. *Id. Consol. ad Pol.* c. 27. et ad *Marc.* c. 19. *Epiclet. Arr. L.* iii. c. 24. *Celsus ap. Origen. L.* v. *Plutarch. Op.* p. 100. *E. Comp. Cleric.* in *Eccl.* iv. 2, 3. *Whiby on 2 Tim. i. 10. Campbell, Necess. of Rev.* § 4. *Chandler. on 1 Thef.* iv. 13, 14.

and none, as we have seen, having ground sufficient to convince them of the contrary;] we, who are taught to look upon it in quite another light, ought to be affected with it in another manner. To them indeed death had a terrible sound, and could not but be attended with a train of the most melancholy reflections; whenever they were forced, (as they were frequently) to reflect upon it. This would unavoidably be mixing with all their entertainments; and when it did so, would as unavoidably allay and spoil their relish; which we find some of them confessing and complaining of †. This was the sword continually hanging over their heads by a single hair; the spectre always haunting their abode; which, whatever some professed libertines might pretend, would cast a sudden damp on every joy; it would leave no present gratification free from anxiety; and as to any future prospects, through what a gloom must each considerate person view these, which were all to be cut off so very soon, and either close in a final absolute extinction; or, if he should be called to life again, that life commence a state of punishment and suffering; to which, he must be conscious, he was but too liable! In this case, how could man, even a comparatively wise and good man, contemplate himself any otherwise, than as *walking all his life-time in a vain shadow*, and at last *lying down in sorrow and despair!*

But

†. Cic. Tusc. Q. 1. 11, 13.—de Fin. 1. 38.—Mors, quæ quasi saxum Tantalo, semper impendet.

But how entirely is this scene changed under the Christian dispensation! What a different apprehension must we now have of death, when we know that it is so far from injuring any of our most rational pleasures, or destroying our pursuits, that it rather puts us into a capacity of enjoying them more perfectly; and opens a way to our more free, full, and uninterrupted prosecution of them, to eternity! A way, which though, for reasons intimated above, it must be in some measure gloomy still; yet is there little left to terrify;—much to support and comfort us, when we come into *the shadow of this vale of death*;—enough to brighten up its horrors, and convert them into a crown of glory;—to make us even rejoice that we are got so near it; from whence we may survey those blissful seats of paradise, that are prepared to receive us;—and to which it immediately conducts us. The heathen had at best but feeble arguments for, or rather some faint guesses at, and wishes of, an Hereafter; and in the mean time were tossed to and fro in uncertainty, among their several confused systems; fluctuating in perpetual doubts; and on each disappointment, ready to give all up, and fly even to the most miserable of comforts, utter *insensibility*, for refuge*. How vastly different is our case; who have so firm a ground of expectation to rely on; and that strong consolation
which

* Vid. *Cic. Considerat.* n. [B] p. 128. *Portus enim praestō est, aeternum nihil sentienti receptaculum.* Id. *Tusc. Disp.* v. 40.

which results from it, in all difficulties and distresses ! Who can at all times *lay hold on the hope that is set before us, as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast* ; God himself having given us not only express promises, in which it is impossible for him to lie ; but also many infallible proofs, and actual instances, of what the generality of heathens were used to think impossible †, a resurrection from the dead. And though, as being *partakers of flesh and blood*, we are still *naturally mortal* ; nor was it Christ's intent to alter our whole frame instantaneously, by translating us into some different order of Beings ; as he must have done, had he freed us from all natural corruption ; and which (as we have seen above) would have been highly improper, so long as there were the seeds of moral corruption yet remaining in us :—but he chose rather to improve our nature gradually, and procure a proportional enlargement of its privileges ; as he did in the most effectual manner, by laying hold of the same nature ; and lifting it up, first from the body of sin, by his doctrine and example ; and then purchasing for it a release from its present sorrow, pain, and dissolution, by a life of perfect innocence, consummate virtue, and complete *obedience unto death.*

And thus, by the mediation of the second *Adam*, are we delivered from the most dreadful part of the sentence

† *Plin. N. H. L.* iii. c. 9. *ib. L. vii* c. 35. *Cels. ap. Orig. v. p. 240. M. Anton. xii. 5.* See *Whitby* on *i Thef. iv. 13.* and *Halle's Discourses*, Vol. I. p. 298.

sentence entail'd on the first ; that which denounced death absolutely, and indeterminately ; and thereby left man in a state of unlimited subjection to it ; or rather, this death, which though in one sense it still preserves its power over the world ; and will and ought (as we have seen) to preserve it, during the whole of this probationary state ;—and likewise on account of that sin whereof it is the great corrective, has still the appearance, and the name of an enemy, [*the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death ;*] this I say, to us is become a very different thing from what it was to our first parents, and the generality of their offspring ; before the dawning of that prospect, which our Lord has opened by his coming into the world. 'Tis now so far from the extinction of our Being ; that it becomes the great improvement, and the exaltation of it :—the end of all our labours in one state ; and the commencement of our recompence in another. In which view, God will not appear either to have made all men for nought ; or suffered them to be entirely subject unto vanity, even here : the present life, however frail and transitory, if thus taken in relation to, and as connected with another ; is very far from being an useless, or contemptible gift :—much may be done in this bad world, if we but make a proper use of it ; towards rendering ourselves *meet to be partakers* of a better :—the ground of the heart may be prepared ;—the seed of virtue sown ;—the heavenly plant so far produced and forwarded ; that when-

whenever it shall be removed to a more favourable clime, it may spring up, and flourish in immortal life: and our being inform'd that it certainly will do so, must be the strongest motive and incitement to us for thus labouring chearfully in our Lord's vineyard; for being *stedfast and unmoveable, always abounding in his work*; *forasmuch as we know, that our labour shall not be in vain.* Our title to this immortality is now so sure, that we are often addressed as if already in possession of it*. We are said to have *already passed from death to life*†.—We are taught to consider this our temporary dissolution as no death, in the original, proper sense of the word‡; since we can not have any apprehension that it will leave us under *the bondage of corruption, and in the blackness of darkness* for ever; but on the contrary, are assured, that it leads us to *the glorious liberty of the children of God; to an inheritance incorruptible, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.*

Thus

* *Heb. xii. 22, 23.* See *Benson* on *1 John iii. 14.* and *Eph. ii. 6.*

† *John v. 21.* *1 John iii 14.*

‡ *Quando homo peccator incipit credere in Filium Dei vera et viva fide, et illius principii vita particeps evadit, per quod aeternum illud exitium superaturus est; tum simul dicitur superasie mortem temporaalem, quae solummodo considerabatur ut aeternae mortis ministra.* Ac proin credens non dicitur *mori*, etiam quoad corpus; quia *nexus* qui inter hanc et aeternam mortem erat, sublatus est. *Vitrina, Observ. Sacr. Lib. ii. c. 7. p. 351.* ‘Death is as nothing, compared to what it would otherwise have been to the sinner; and the felicity of heaven is so sure, and so near, that by an easy and common figure, true Christians are spoken of as *already there.*’ *Doddr,* on *Job. viii. 51, 32.*

Thus is mortality swallowed up of life ; and we henceforth are said not to die*, but sleep ; as Christ pronounces of those two whom he had raised† ; and as the intermediate state of every Christian is described by his apostles‡ : nay, in his profess'd proof of a general resurrection ; he declares of all the faithful, that they ever *live to God* ; as being still *in covenant* with him§ ; from whom death itself cannot separate them|| : nor will the interval between that and the resurrection, be of any more account with God, than it is of real import to themselves ; as we have seen.

Thus, though in the sight of the unwise, we seem to die, (or drop into a total annihilation,) yet is our hope full of immortality ; and our departure and dismission from this mortal state, becomes our entrance and admission into it. Well therefore may we now say with the Psalmist **, *Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. I will lay me down in peace, and sleep; till I awake in the morning,* of the resurrection. We may, with the good apostle, clearly commit our souls into the hand of our faithful Creator ; who, we are persuaded, is able to keep that which is committed unto him, against that day. What a mild and unterrifying thing must death be, in such a view

* John vi. 50, 51.—xi. 26.

† Matt ix. 24. Mark v. 39. Luke viii. 52. John xi 11.

‡ 1 Cor. xv. 18, 20. 1 Thess. iv. 13. 14.—v. 10. vide supra.

§ Luke xx. 38. || Rom. viii. 38, 39.

** Psal. cxvi. 7. Psal. xvii. 15. xlix. 14.

a view as this! 'Tis nothing, we see, in the scripture-account; nor are we ever bid to fear, or prepare for it, (as is observed by a pious writer†;) but to *look* and *watch* for ‡, and *hasten unto*, *that coming of the day of the Lord* ||, which it directly introduces; and which is therefore said to be *at hand* §; to *draw nigh*, and *present our judge*, even *at the door* (1). There is nothing therefore terrible in Death, to such as have learned to conceive of it aright; and are ready to abide its consequences. The pains that may attend it are uncertain; oft far from being equal to those

we

† *Taylor* on *Rom.* p. 355. Comp. *Alexander* on *1 Cor.* xv. p. 34

‡ *Matt.* xxiv. 42. &c. xxv. 13. *Mark* xiii. 33, &c.

|| *2 Pet.* iii. 12.

§ *Rom.* xiii. 12. *Phil.* iv 5. *1 Pet.* iv 7.

(1) *James* v. 7, 8, 9. *The hour is coming, and now is;* *John* v. 25. Though some of these, and the like passages, may more immediately relate to Christ's first coming to judgment, at the destruction of *Jerusalem*; as some learned men suppose; (see *Jortin's Remarks on Eccl. Hist.* Vol. 1. p. 49, 50,) yet are they no less applicable to his second coming in the sense abovementioned; whereof the former has been generally considered as a type; and both are usually described in the same terms, *Matt.* xxiv. 29. &c. *Cb. Aug. Heumannus* in *1 Cor.* i. 8. *H̄iμερος τοῦ Κυρίου, εἰτ dies extremus Judicii. Quamvis enim Corinthiorum nullus hoc die superstes futurus sit; tamen cum a die hominum emortuali ad diem Judicii, nullum vel bene agendi, vel resipisciendi spatium pateat; utraque dies tanquam conjuncta spectatur.* Nov. *Act. Erud.* 1759. p. 194. ib p. 204. *Observat Heumannus* in *1 Cor.* xv. 29. de *Baptismo ἡστὸν νεκρῶν*, scripsisse *hoc Paulum* ad eos, qui cum *Judeis* statuerint corpus et animum pari somno premi ad dem usque *Judicii*, simulque utrumque resuscitatum iri. *Hæc plerorumque, qui sub vet. Fœd. vivebant, sententia fuit, quemadmodum Heumannus Programmate A 1757. edito docuit.* Imo eadem opinio M. CCCC. post C. N. annos in Ecclesia Christiana regnavit. Sed hoc loco eam non impugnat *Apostolus*; verum potius, tanquam a lectoribus suis receptam, et ipse adsumere videtur. Comp. *Alexander*. *Paraphr.* on *1 Cor.* xv. p. 88, &c.

we undergo on other occasions ; never to be compared with what must be endured after it ; if we have not already taken out its *sting*. But if we take due care to be of the number of those, to whom these *great and precious promises* belong ;—if we have an interest in, a well grounded expectation of them ; we shall be so far from dreading, and declining ; that we cannot well avoid often dwelling on, and ever delighting in the prospect of that path, which safely leads us to the substance, and completion of them. 'Till we have done this, indeed we are, and ought to be, in a state of bondage to this king of terrors. Nor can we ever so far get the better of them, as to behold our change in an agreeable light ; or bear the reflection on it, with any tolerable quiet and composure of mind :—it will yet fill our cup with bitterness ;—make our whole life melancholy ; and its end confusion, and dismay*.

Seeing then, that the all-wise Creator of the world has, for so many good ends, been pleased to put it under the dominion of death ; and the all-merciful Redeemer hath so fully done his part, to qualify this seemingly most dreadful dispensation ; and convert it into the greatest real blessing ; by making it a proper passage to, and preparation for an infinitely nobler and more perfect state : Let us be persuaded to do our parts

* Many excellent Reflections on this subject, may be seen in A. Tuckers *Light of nature pursued V.* the last. c. 37.

parts likewise, that these gracious ends may be obtained in us ; and by consequence, that this necessary means to them, may be ever reflected on *with joy*, and *not with grief* : nay, that the thought of this may serve, as it is intended, to the mitigation of all other griefs ; and to the improvement, and the consummation of our joys ; whilst we are ever looking for, and longing after that *blessed hope, and the glorious appearance of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*

A P P E N D I X:

Concerning the Use of the Words

S O U L, or *S P I R I T,*

In

Holy S C R I P T U R E;

And the

State of the *D E A D* there described.

A P P E N D I X

Concerning the Use of the Works

Z O U T o r S P R A C H

in

HOLY SCRIPURE

and the

Scriptures of the SAINTS

A P P E N D I X:

Concerning the use of the words *Soul*,
or *Spirit*, in holy Scripture; and the
state of the *Dead* there described.

IN the first place the words וְנֶפֶשׁ, רֹוחַ, and נֶרֶת, in the Old Testament, which are in our version generally translated *soul*, or *spirit*; as well as those of the same import in the New, ψυχή and άγγελος; most commonly denote,

I. PERSONS.

Gen. xvii. 14. (a) That *soul* shall be cut off. Add *Exod. xii. 15, 19.*—*Lev. iv. 2.* If a *soul* shall sin through ignorance.—27.—if any one (a) of the common people sin through ignorance. Add vi. 2. vii. 20.—the *soul* that eateth of the flesh of the sacrifice.—21. the *soul* that shall touch any unclean thing. Add 25, 27. and xvii. 10, 15, xix. 8. xx. 6. xxii. 11. If the priest buy any *soul* with his money, xxiii. 30. And whatsoever *soul* it be, that doth any work in that same day, the same *soul* will I destroy from among his people. Add *Num. xv. 30, 31. xix. 13, 20. Deut. xxiv. 7.* If a man be found stealing any (a) of his brethren. *2 Sam. xiv. 14.* Neither doth God respect any *person* (b). *Prov. xiii. 2.*—the *soul* of

a וְנֶפֶשׁ

b Et non tollit Deus animam. Vid. *Cleric.*

of the transgressors shall eat violence. Add xiv, 25. xix. 2. *Ezek.* xviii. 4. Behold, all *souls* are mine; as the *soul* of the father, so also the *soul* of the son is mine. xxvii. 13.—they traded the *person* of men. *Acts.* ii. 43.—fear came upon every *soul*. Add *Rom.* ii. 9. xiii. 1. *1 Tim.* iv 1. seducing *spirits*, i. e. seducers. *2 Pet.* ii. 14.—beguiling unstable *souls*. *Rev.* xviii. 13.—the merchandise of gold and silver,—and slaves, and *souls* of men.

2. Secondly, People;

As when they are numbered. *Gen.* xlvi. 15. All the *souls* of his sons and daughters were thirty and three. Add 22, 27. *Exod.* i. 5. xii. 4.—xvi. 16.—according to the number of your *persons*. *Num.* xxxi. 28.—levy a tribute—one *soul* of five hundred, both of the persons, and of the beeves, &c.—35.—thirty and two thousand (*c*) *persons* in all.—40—the (*c*) *persons* were sixteen thousand.—46. sixteen thousand (*c*) *persons*. *i Chron.* v. 21.—they took away—of men an hundred thousand. *Jer.* lii. 29.—carried away captive—eight hundred and thirty two (*c*) *persons*. 30.—*Nebuzaradan*—carried away captive of the *Jews* seven hundred and forty five *persons*. *Acts* ii. 41.—the same day were added unto them about three thousand *souls*. Add vii. 14. xxvii. 37. *i Pet.* iii. 20.—And divided into families. *Gen.* xlvi. 27. All the *souls* of the house of *Jacob* which came into *Egypt*.

i Sam.

1 Sam. xxii. 22. I have occasioned the death of all the (*c*) *persons* of thy father's house.

—Or distinguished from other goods. *Gen. xiii. 5.* *Abraham* took *Sarai* his wife, and *Lot*—and all their their substance,—and the *souls* that they had gotten in *Haran*. *xiv. 21.*—Give me the *persons*, and take the goods to thyself. *Josb. xi. 14.* But every man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them; neither left they any to *breathe* (*d*).

Add *1 Kings xv. 29.*

3. Thirdly, *soul*, or *spirit* often signifies the *man himself*: as *my soul*, i. e. *I*. *Gen. xii. 13.* Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister—and my *soul* shall live because of thee. *xix. 20.*—let me escape thither,—and my *soul* shall live. *xxvii. 4.* that my *soul* may bless thee before I die. *Job vii. 15.*—so that my *soul* chooseth strangling. *x. 1.* my *soul* is weary of my life. Add *Psal. xxxv. 9.* *lvii. 4.* *Matt. xxvi. 38.*

My soul, i. e. *me*. *Num. xxiii. 10.*—(*e*) let me die the death of the righteous. *Psalm xxxv. 3.*—say unto my *soul*, I am thy salvation. *xli. 4.* heal my *soul*, for I have sinned against thee.

Thy *soul*, i. e. *thyself*. *Esth. iv. 13.* *Prov. iii. 22.* so shall they be life unto thy *soul*. *Ezek. iii. 19.*—thou hast delivered thy *soul*. Add *v. 21.*

Thy *spirit*, i. e. *thee*. *2 Tim. vi. 22.* The Lord Jesus be with thy *spirit*.

His

d כָּמֹשׁ

e שְׁנִי

A a 4

His soul, i. e. *himself*. *Prov.* xi. 17. The merciful man doth good to his own *soul*. Add xx. 2.

Her soul, i. e. *herself*. *Isai.* v. 14. (applied by a prosopopœia to the grave) therefore hell hath enlarged *herself*.

Their souls, i. e. *themselves*. *Isai.* xlvi. 2.—*themselves* are gone into captivity, [applied to idols.]

Your soul, i. e. *you*. 2 *Cor.* xii. 15. I will very gladly spend, and be spent for *you* (*f*).

Your spirit, i. e. *yourselves*. *Mat.* ii. 15, and 16. take heed to *your spirit*.

My spirit and yours, i. e. *you and me*. 1 *Cor.* xvi. 18.—they have refreshed *my spirit* and *yours*. And in many other places. Thus,

4. Fourthly, *souls*, i. e. *persons*, are said to *eat*. *Exod.* xii. 16.—no manner of work shall be done, —save that which every *man* must eat.

To *abhor meat*. *Job* xxxiii. 20. So that his life abhorreth bread, and his *soul* dainty meat. *Psal.* cvii. 18. Their *soul* abhorreth all manner of meat.

To be *satisfied*. *Ezek.* vii. 19.—they shall not satisfy their *souls*.

To be *made fat*. *Prov.* xi. 25. The liberal *soul* shall be made fat. So xiii. 4.

Or *full*. *Prov.* xxvii. 7. The full *soul* loatheth an honey-comb.

To be *hungry*. ib. To the hungry *soul* every bitter thing is sweet. *Psal.* cvii. 9.—he satisfieth the longing

f Τιπε ται ψυχαι ιματι.

ing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness. *Prov.* vi. 30. Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry.

Thirsty. *Prov.* xxv. 25. As cold waters to a thirsty soul.

To faint *Psal.* cvii. 5.—their soul fainted in them.

To be smote with the sword. *Josh.* x. 23.—*Joshua* took *Makkedah*, and smote it with the edge of the sword—them, and all the souls that were therein. So 30, 32. xi. 11. *1 Kings* xv. 29. he smote all the house of *Jeroboam*: he left not to *Jeroboam* any that breathed (g).

Or cut off. *Psal.* lxxvi. 12. He shall cut off the spirit (b) of princes.

(See above, under *Persons*.)

To be killed. *Gen.* xxxvii. 21.—Let us not kill (i) him. *Num.* xxxi. 19.—whoever hath killed any (i) person. xxxv. 30. whoso killeth any (i) person. *Josh.* xx. 3.—the slayer that killeth any (i) person unawares. *Mark* iii. 4.—Is it lawful to save (k) life, or to kill. *Deut.* xix. 6.—lest the avenger of blood pursue the slayer,—and kill (i) him. Add *Rev.* vi. 9. 11.

Slain. *Deut.* xxii. 26.—as when a man riseth against his neighbour and slayeth (i) him. xxvii. 25. Cursed be he that taketh reward to slay an innocent (i) person. *Jer.* xl. 14.—Dost thou certainly know that *Baalis*—hath sent *Ishmael* to slay (i) thee. *Ezek.* xiii. 19. will ye pollute me— to slay the souls that should not die?

Devoured.

g יְמָשָׁבֵךְ

b תִּירֹא

i וְנַפְתַּח

k ἀνθεῖς.

Devoured. *Ezek.* xxii. 25.—they have devoured souls.

Destroyed. *Luke* vi. 9.—Is it lawful to save (*k*) life, or to destroy it? *Acts* iii. 23.—every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed.

To die. *Jos.* ii. 14.—our (*i*) life for yours. (*Heb.* our soul to die instead of you.) *Judg.* xvi. 30.—Sampson said, Let (*i*) me die with the Philistines. *Job* xxxvi. 14. (*i*) They die in youth. *Ezek.* xviii. 20. The soul that finneth, it shall die.

To fail. *Isai.* lvii. 16.—the spirit should fail before me.

To be lost. *Matt.* x. 39. He that findeth his (*k*) life shall lose it, and he that loseth his (*k*) life—shall find it. So xvi. 25,—26. What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? *Luke* xvii. 33. Whosoever shall seek to save his (*k*) life, shall lose it, &c.

Or kept alive. *Psal.* xxii. 29.—none can keep alive his own soul. *Ezek.* xiii. 18.—Will ye save the souls alive that come unto you?

And saved. *Job* ii. 6.—but save his (*l*) life. Add *Mark* iii. 4. *Luke* vi. 9. *James* 5. 20.—shall save a soul from death.

To be delivered from death, hell, the pit, or grave. *Josh.* ii. 13.—that ye will—deliver our (*m*) lives from death. *Job* xxxiii. 18. He keepeth back his soul from the pit.—30.—to bring back his soul from the pit.

Add

Add *Psal.* vi. 4. vii. 2. xxx. 3.—xlix. 15. God will redeem my *soul* from the power of the grave. Add lvi. 13. lxxxvi. 2. 13. lxxxix. 48. cxvi. 8. *Prov.* xxiii. 14. Thou—shalt deliver his *soul* from hell. *Ifai.* xxxviii. 17.—thou hast in love to my *soul* delivered it from the pit of corruption. *Jonah* ii. 6.—yet hast thou brought up my (*m*) *life* from corruption.

II. Sometimes these words include ALL LIVING CREATURES.

Gen. i. 20. Let the waters bring forth—the moving creature that hath (*m*) *life*.—24. Let the earth bring forth the (*m*) *living creature*.—30—every beast, &c. wherein there is *life*. (Margin, a *living soul*).—ii. 7.—and man became a *living soul*.—19.—whatsoever *Adam* called every (*m*) *living creature*, that was the name thereof. vii. 22. All in whose nostrils was the *breath of life* (*n*). ix. 12.—This is the token of the covenant which I make between you and every (*m*) *living creature*.—16.—that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every (*m*) *living creature*. *Deut.* xx. 16.—thou shalt save alive (*o*) nothing that breatheth. 1 *Cer.* xv. 45.—The first man *Adam* was made a (*p*) *living soul*; the last *Adam* was made a (*q*) *quickening spirit*. *Rev.* viii. 9.—the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had (*r*) *life*, died, xvi. 3.—Every *living soul* died in the sea.

First,

n πνεῦμα. *o πνεῦμα.* *p Ψυχή ζωτική.* *q Πνεῦμα ζωοποιῶν.*
r Τα ἵκεσθαι ψυχάς.

III. Sometimes the **BODY** alone ; and that either,

First, *living*. *Job* xxxiii. 22.—His *soul* draweth near unto the grave. *Ps.* cv. 18.—He was laid in iron (*Heb.* the iron entered his *soul*.) Comp. *Luke* ii. 35.

Or, Secondly, *dead*. *Num.* v. 2. Whosoever is defiled by the (s) *dead*. vi. 6.—He shall come at no (s) *dead body*.—11.—He sinned by the *dead*. ix. 6. Defiled by the *dead body* of a man. x. 7.—If any of you—shall be unclean, by reason of a *dead body*. (*Heb.* *dead soul*.) xix. 13. Whosoever touched the *dead body* of any man that is *dead*. *Lev.* xix. 28. Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the *dead*. xxi. 1.—There shall none be defiled for the *dead*.—11. Neither shall he go into any *dead body*. xxii. 4. The *dead*. *Job*. xiv. 22.—His flesh upon him shall have pain, and his *soul* within him shall mourn. (v. *Chapplelow*, Comment. ib.) *Hag.* ii. 13.—If any that is unclean by a *dead body*.

And, thirdly, *buried*. *Ps.* xvi. 10.—Thou wilt not leave my *soul* in hell : which is repeated *Acts* ii. 27, 31. Vid. *Beza* & *Whitby* in loc.

IV. Some of the same words stand for the **LIFE** both of man and beast, and often are so rendered in our version.

Gen. vi. 3. My spirit shall not always strive with man (*Heb.* the *soul* which I give man shall not continue. vid. *Cleric.* in loc.) vii. 22.—All in whose nostrils

trils was the (*t*) *breadth of life* (*Heb. breath of the spirit of life*) died. ix. 5. Your blood of your lives will I require (*Heb. blood in your souls.*) xix. 17.—Escape for thy *life*. xxxii. 30.—I have seen God face to face, and my *life* is preserved. *Exod.* iv. 19.—All the men are dead which sought thy *life*. xxx. 12.—Then shall they give every man a ransom for his *soul*. *Num.* xvi. 22.—O God, the God of the *spirits* of all flesh. vid. *Cleric.* in loc. So xxvii. 16. *1 Sam.* xix. 5.—He did put his *life* in his hand—11.—If thou save not thy *life* to-night. Add xxi. 1. xxv. 29.—Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy *soul*; but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of *life* with the lord thy God. *2 Sam.* iv. 9. As the Lord liveth who hath redeemed my *soul* out of all adversity. *1 Kings* xix. 10.—They seek my *life* to take it away. So v. 14. and *2 Kings* i. 14.—*Job* ii. 6. Behold he is in thine hand, but save his *life*. x. 12.—Thy visitation hath preserved my (*u*) *spirit*. xii. 10. In whose hand is the *soul* of every living thing, and the *breath* of all mankind. xxvii. 8. What is the hope of the hypocrite, when God taketh away his *soul*? xxxiii. 28. He will deliver his *soul* from going into the pit, and 30. *P/s.* xxxi. 5. Into thine hand I commit my (*u*) *spirit*. xxxv. 7.—A pit, which without cause they have digged for my *soul*. lxix. 1. Save me O God, for the waters are come in unto my *soul*. Add lxxi. 13. lxxiv. 19.—*Prov.* xiii. 3. He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his *life*. xvi. 17.—He that keepeth his way, preserveth his *soul*.

Add

Add xix. 16. *Eccles.* viii. 8. There is no man that hath power over the (*u*) *spirit*, to retain the (*u*) *spirit* *Jer.* iv. 30.—They will seek thy *life*. x. 14.—There is no (*u*) *breath* in them. xxii. 25. I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy *life*. xlvi. 6. Flee, save your *lives*. li. 6. Flee—and deliver every man his *soul*. *Ezek.* xxxvii. 5, 6.—Thus saith the Lord unto these bones—I will cause (*u*) *breath* to enter into you.—8. There was no (*u*) *breath* in them. *Amos* ii. 14, 15.—Neither shall the mighty deliver *himself*. *Zech.* xii. 1.—The Lord which—formeth the (*u*) *spirit* of man within him. *Matt.* ii. 20.—They are dead which sought the young child's (*x*) *life*. vi. 25.—Take no thought for your (*x*) *life*, what ye shall eat.—Is not the (*x*) *life* more than meat? x. 39. He that findeth his (*x*) *life* shall lose it; and he that loseth his (*x*) *life* for my sake shall find it. So xvi. 25, 26. xx. 28.—The son of man came to give his (*x*) *life* a ransom for many. *Mark* viii. 36, 37. What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own *soul*? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his *soul*? **Add** x. 45. *Luke* viii. 55.—her (*y*) *spirit* came again. **Add** ix. 24, 56. xii. 22, 23.—take no thought for your (*x*) *life*, what ye shall eat,—the (*x*) *life* is more than meat. xiv. 26. If any man come to me, and hate not—his own (*x*) *life* also, he cannot be my disciple. xvii. 33. Whosoever shall seek to save his (*x*) *life* shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his (*x*) *life*, shall preserve it. xxiii. 46.—Father, into thy hands I commend my (*y*) *spirit*; and having said thus he gave up the ghost.

*Job.**x Ψνχη.**y Πνυμα.*

Job. x. 11.—the good shepherd giveth his (x) *life* for the sheep, So v. 15, and 17.—I lay down my (x) *life*, that I might take it again. xii. 25. He that loveth his (x) *life* shall lose it. xiii. 37. I will lay down my (x) *life* for thy sake. So v. 38. xv. 13. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his (z) *life* for his friends. *Acts* xv. 26. Men that have hazarded their (z) *lives* for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. xx. 10.—his (z) *life* is in him 24. neither count I my (z) *life* dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy. xxvii. 10.—this voyage will be with hurt—not only of the lading and ship, but also of our (z) *lives*. Add v. 22.—*Rom.* xi. 3.—they seek my (z) *life*. xvi. 4. who have for my (z) *life* laid down their own necks. *Phil.* ii. 30.—he was nigh unto death, not regarding his (z) *life*. *1 Thess.* ii. 8. We were willing to have imparted unto you our own *souls*. *1 Pet.* ii. 19.—let them that suffer commit the keeping of their *souls* to him, as to a faithful Creator. *1 John* iii. 16. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his (z) *life* for us: and we ought to lay down our (z) *lives* for the brethren. *Rev.* xii. 11.—they loved not their (z) *lives* unto the death.

Which *life* is placed either, first, in the **BLOOD**.

Gen. ix. 4. But flesh with the *life* thereof, which is the blood thereof, shalt thou not eat. *Lev.* xvii. 11. For the *life* of the flesh is in the blood. v. 14. For it is the *life* of all flesh, the blood of it is for the *life* thereof. *Deut.* xii. 23.—the blood is the *life*, and thou mayest not eat the *life* with the flesh,

[hence]

[hence called the blood of *souls*, *Jer.* ii. 34.—in thy skirts is found the blood of the *souls* of the poor innocents.] And accordingly said to be *poured out*. *Isa.* liii. 12.—he hath poured out his *soul* unto death. *Lam.* ii. 12.—their *soul* was poured out into their mother's bosom.

Or, Secondly, BREATH. *Gen.* ii. 7.—God formed man—and breathed into his nostrils the (*a*) *breath* of life. vi. 17.—I do bring a flood—to destroy all flesh wherein is the (*b*) *breath* of life. And so vii. 15, and 22. *1 Kings xvii.* 17.—his sickness was so sore, that there was no (*a*) *breath* left in him. *Job* xii. 10. In whose hand is the *soul* of every living thing, and the (*b*) *breath* of all mankind. xxvi. 4.—whose (*a*) *spirit* came from thee. Add xxvii. 3. xxxiv. 14. If he set his heart upon man, if he gather unto himself his (*b*) *spirit* and his (*a*) *breath*. *Ps.* cl. 6. Every thing that hath (*a*) *breath*. *Eccl.* iii. 19.—that which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth beasts—they have all one (*b*) *breath*. *If.* ii. 22. Cease ye from man, whose (*a*) *breath* is in his nostrils. xlvi. 5. That giveth *breath* unto the people. *Ezek.* xxxvii. 9, 10. —Prophesy unto the (*b*) *wind*—say to the (*b*) *wind*—come from the four (*b*) *winds*, O *breath*, and breathe upon these slain.—so I prophesied,—and the (*b*) *breath* came into them. *Dan.* v. 23.—the God in whose hand thy (*a*) *breath* is. x. 17.—there remained no strength

strength in me, neither is there (*a*) breath left in me.
Ja. ii. 26. the body without the (*c*) spirit is dead.

Which breath, spirit, or life,

Enters into a man. *Gen.* ii. 7. God formed man, and breathed into his nostrils the (*a*) breath of life. *Rev.* ii. 11.—the (*d*) spirit of life from God entered into them.

Goes forth. *Ps.* cxlv. 4. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth.

Departeth. *Gen.* xxxv. 18.—as her (*e*) breath was in departing.

Comes again. *1 Sam.* xxx. 12.—when he had eaten, his (*b*) spirit came again to him. *1 Kings* xvii. 21.—let this child's soul come into him again. *Luke* viii. 55.—her (*f*) spirit came again, and she arose.

Is taken away. *Ps.* civ. 29—thou takest away their (*g*) breath, they die.

Received. *Acts* vii. 59.—Lord Jesus receive my (*f*) spirit. (vid. Objections.)

Given or yielded up. *Jer.* xv. 9. She hath given up the (*b*) ghost. *Matt.* xxvii. 50. Jesus—yielded up the (*f*) ghost. Add *John* xix. 30.—*Acts* v. 5, 10.

Expired. *Job* xxxi. 39.—if I—have caused the soul of the owners thereof to expire (as in the margin.) *Mark* xv. 37. οἱ Ιησος ἀπενεγκαν. So v. 39. and *Luke* xxiii. 46.

V. These

εχωρις απνυματος. *δ πνυμα ζωο.* *ε ψηφια* *γ πνυμα.* *η ψηφια*

V. These words describe man in respect to his
FUTURE LIFE.

Matt. x. 28. Fear not them—which are not able to kill the *soul*. (vid. Objections.) *i Cor. v. 5.*—that the (*s*) *spirit* may be saved in the day of the Lord. *2 Cor. xii. 15.* And I will very gladly spend and be spent for (*i*) *you*. *Heb. x. 39.*—we are—of them that believe to the saving of the *soul*. *xii. 23.*—the *spirits* of just men made perfect (vid. Objections.) *xiii. 17.* Obey them that have the rule over you—for they watch for your *souls*. *Ja. i. 21.*—receive the word, which is able to save your *souls*. *i Pet. i. 9.* Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your *souls*. *ii. 25.*—ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned to the shepherd and bishop of your *souls*. *iv. 19.*—let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their *souls* to him. *Rev. xx. 4.*—I saw the *souls* of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus—and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

VI. In some places they denote the LOWER APPETITES, affections, passions of the mind, or man; or the seat of such appetites, &c.

Gen. xxxiv. 3.—his *soul* clave unto *Dinah*. *xli. 8.*—it came to pass that his *spirit* was troubled. *xlii. 21.*—we are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his *soul*, &c. *Exod. vi. 9.*—they

they hearkened not unto *Moses* for anguish of spirit xv. 9.—my *lust* shall be satisfied upon them. xxiii. 9.—ye know the (*b*) heart of a stranger. *Lev.* xvi. 29.—ye shall afflict your *souls*. *Numb.* xi. 6. Our *soul* is dried away. *Deut.* xii. 15.—thou mayest—eat flesh—whatsoever thy *soul* lusteth after. xxiii. 24.—thou mayest eat grapes thy fill, (*k*) at thine own pleasure. xxiv. 15—thou shalt give him his hire,—for he is poor, and setteth his (*b*) heart upon it. *Judg.* viii. 3. then their (*g*) anger was abated towards him. *1 Sam.* i. 10.—She was in bitterness of *soul*.—v. 15.—I am a woman of a sorrowful (*g*)spirit. ii. 16—take as much as thy *soul* desireth. xviii. 1.—the *soul* of *Jonathan* was knit with the *soul* of *David*, and *Jonathan* loved him as his own *soul*. xxii. 2.—every one that was (*l*) discontented, gathered themselves unto him. xxx. 6.—the *soul* of all the people was grieved. *2 Sam.* xiii. 39.—the *soul* of King *David* longed to go forth unto *Absalom*. xvii. 8.—thou knowest thy father, and his men, that they be mighty men, and they be (*l*) chafed in their minds. *2 Chron.* xxi. 16.—the Lord stirred up against *Jehoram* the (*g*) spirit of the *Philistines*. *Job* iii. 20.—Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in *soul*? xiv. 22.—his *soul* within him shall mourn. xxx. 16.—my *soul* is poured out upon me, the days of affliction have taken hold upon me. *Ps.* xxvii. 14. He shall strengthen

strengthen thine *heart*. xxxi. 9.—mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, my *soul* and my belly. xxxv. 25. let them not say in their hearts, *Ab, lo would we have it (ab, ab, our soul, vid. margin.)* lxxvii. 2.—my *soul* refused to be comforted. lxxviii. 18.—they tempted God—by asking meat (*m*) for their lust. cvii. 9.—he satisfieth the longing *soul*, and filleth the hungry *soul*. cxliii. 4. Therefore is my *spirit* overwhelmed within me. Prov. xv. 13.—by sorrow of the heart, the (*n*) *spirit* is broken. xvii. 22.—a broken *spirit* drieth the bones. xxiii. 2.—put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to *appetite*. xxv. 28.—He that hath no rule over his own *spirit*, is like a city that is broken down. xxxi. 6. Give wine to those that be (*o*) of heavy hearts. Eccl. vi. 7. The *appetite* is not filled,—9. Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the (*p*) *desire*. Isa. xxix. 8. It shall even be as when a hungry man dreameth, and behold he eateth; but he awaketh, and his *soul* is empty: behold he is faint, and his *soul* hath *appetite*. xxxii. 6. To make empty the *soul* of the hungry. xxxviii. 15.—I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my *soul*. liv. 6.—the Lord hath called thee as a woman—grieved in (*n*) *spirit*. lv. 2. Let your *soul* delight itself in fatness. lviii. 10.—if thou draw out thy *soul* to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted *soul*.—11.—the Lord shall—satisfy thy *soul* in drought. Jer. ii. 24. That snuffeth up the wind at her (*p*) *pleasure*. Dan. ii.

3.—my

3.—my *spirit* was troubled to know the dream. *Mic.* vii. 1.—my *soul* desireth the first ripe fruit. *Hab.* ii. 5. enlargeth his *desire*. *John* x. 24.—(q) how long dost thou make us to doubt? *animam nostram tollis.* xii. 27. Now is my *soul* troubled. *Acts* xiv. 2—the unbelieving *Jews* stirred up the *Gentiles*, and made their *minds* evil affected towards the brethren. xvii. 16.—his (r)*spirit* was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. *Heb.* xii. 3.—lest ye be wearied, and faint in your *minds*. *Ja.* iv. 5.—the *spirit* that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy. *Rcv.* xviii. 14.—the fruits that thy *soul* lusteth after are departed from thee.

VII. In other places they signify the **SUPERIOR FACULTIES**, and operations of a man's mind;

As when these last are super-added to the former.

Deut. xxvi. 16.—thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy *soul*. Add xxx. 6. *Matt.* xxii. 37. *Mark* xii. 30, 33. *Luke* x. 27. *Acts* iv. 32.

Or opposed to the *body* or *flesh*. *Mic.* vi. 7. The fruit of my *body* for the sin of my *soul*. *Matt.* xxvi. 41. The *spirit* indeed is willing, but the *flesh* is weak. Add *Mark* xiv. 38. 1 *Cor.* vi. 20.—glorify God in your *body*, and in your *spirit*. Add vii. 34. 2 *Cor.* vii. 1.—let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the

g Ἐντὶς ποτὲ τὴν ψυχὴν ἡμέν τις γίγνεται;

r Πινακα.

the flesh and spirit. *Gal.* iii. 3.—having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Add v. 17. *Eph.* iv. 23.—be renewed in the spirit, of your mind. *Phil.* iii. 3. we—worship God in the spirit—and have no confidence in the flesh. *1 Pet.* ii. 11.—abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul. *3 John* 2. I wish—thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

First, His thoughts. *Ps.* xxiv. 2. who hath not lift up his soul to vanity. xxxii. 2.—in whose spirit there is no guile. *Acts* xix. 21.—Paul purposed in the spirit—to go to Jerusalem,

And intellect. *Prov.* ii. 10. When—knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul. xx. 27. The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord. Add xxxiii. 8. *Mark* ii. 8. When Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned. *1 Cor.* iii. 11.—What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?

Secondly, judgment. *Dan.* v. 12. An excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding—were found in—*Daniel*. *Acts* xv. 24.—certain which went out from us have troubled you—subverting your souls.

Or conscience. *Num.* xxx. 4.—her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul. So v. 5, &c. *Acts* xviii. 5.—Paul was pressed in spirit. *1 Pet.* i. 22.—ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth.

Thirdly, his will and choice. *2 Chron.* xxxvi. 22.—the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus. So *Ezra* i. 1.

Ps.

Psf. xxvii. 12. Deliver me not over to the (*s*) will of mine enemies. *cv.* 22. To bind his princes (*r*) at his pleasure. *Jer.* xxxiv. 16. at their (*s*) pleasure.

Fourthly, His courage, and resolution to pursue it. *Jos.* v. 1.—their heart melted, neither was there spirit in them any more. *Prov.* xviii. 14. The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity. *Hag.* i. 14.—the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel—*Joshua*—and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the Lord. *Act* xviii. 25.—being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently. *Rom.* i. 9. God is my witness whom I serve with my spirit. xiii. 11. not slothful in business, fervent in spirit.

Fifthly, His care and concern. i *Cor.* v. 3.—I verily as absent in body, but present in spirit. Add v. 4.—*Col.* ii. 5. Though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order.

Sixthly, His general temper. *Prov.* xvi. 2. All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the spirits. xvii. 27.—A man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.

Inclination. *Eph.* vi. 6.—Doing the will of God (*t*) from the heart. *Col.* iii. 23.—Whatsoever ye do, do it (*t*) heartily, as to the Lord.

Or disposition. *Gen.* xxiii. 8.—If it be (*u*) your mind that I should bury my dead. *Ex.* xxxv. 21.—they

came

t Ex Ψυχης.

u אָנֹת נְשָׁכַב

came—every one of whom his *spirit* made willing. *Ezek.* xiii. 3.—wo unto the foolish prophets that follow their own *spirit*. *1 Cor.* ii. 12.—we have received, not the *spirit* of the world, but the *spirit* which is of God.

And thus we have a *Broken*. *Ps.* li. 17. The sacrifices of God are a broken *spirit*. *Contrite*; *Is.* lxvi. 2.—to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite *spirit*. *Humble*; *Prov.* xvi. 9.—Better is it to be of an humble *spirit*. *Isa.* lvii. 15.—I dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble *spirit*. *Faithful*; *Prov.* ii. 13.—he that is of a faithful *spirit* concealeth the matter. *Patient*; *Eccles.* vii. 8.—the patient in *spirit* is better than the proud in *spirit*. *Quiet*; *1 Pet.* iii. 4.—the ornament of a meek and quiet *spirit*. *A New*; *Ezek.* xxiii. 31.—make you a new heart, and a new *spirit*. *A Right*; *Ps.* li. 10.—renew a right *spirit* within me. *Or a Haughty*; *Prov.* xvi. 18. Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty *spirit* before a fall. *Perverse*; *Isa.* xix. 14. The Lord hath mingled a perverse *spirit* in the midst thereof. *Hardened spirit*; *Deut.* ii. 30.—the Lord thy God hardened his *spirit*. *Dan.* v. 20. His mind hardened in *pride*. A *spirit* of *Bondage*; *Rom.* viii. 15.—ye have not received the *spirit* of bondage again to fear. Of *Error*; *Is.* xxix. 24. They also that erred in *spirit*. *1 Job.* iv. 6.—hereby know we the *spirit*—of error. Of *Antichrist*; *1 Job.* iv. 3.—this is that *spirit* of Antichrist. *Fear*; *2 Tim.* i. 7. God hath not given us the *spirit* of fear. *Heaviness*; *Is.* lxi.

lxi. 3.—to give unto them the garment of praise for the *spirit* of heaviness. *Sleep*; *If.* xxix. 10.—the Lord hath poured out upon you the *spirit* of deep sleep. *Slumber*; *Rom.* ii. 8.—God hath given them the *spirit* of slumber. *Uncleanness*; *Zech.* xiii. 2. I will cause the *unclean spirit* to pass out of the land. *Whoredoms*; *Hos.* iv. 12.—the *spirit* of whoredoms hath caused them to err. Add v. 4. *Or of Wisdom*; *Ex.* xxviii. 3.—thou shalt speak unto all—whom I have filled with the *spirit of wisdom*. *Judgment*; *If.* iv. 4. When the Lord—shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the *spirit of judgment*. xxviii. 6.—for a *spirit of judgment* to him that sitteth in judgment. *Knowledge*; *If.* ii. 2.—the *spirit of knowledge*, and of the fear of the Lord. *Meekness*; *1 Cor.* iv. 21.—shall I come unto you—in the *spirit of meekness*; *Gal.* vi. 1.—if a man be overtaken in a fault—restore such an one in the *spirit of Meekness*, *Grace*; *Zech.* xii. 10.—I will pour upon the house of David—the *spirit of grace*. *Truth*; *1 John* iv. 6.—Hereby know we the *spirit of truth*.

VIII, Sometimes both the **SUPERIOR** and **INFERIOR FACULTIES** of the mind, or man, are joined together, and represented by the same words promiscuously;

As in *Psal.* cxlii. 3.—the enemy hath persecuted my *soul*.—4. therefore is my *spirit* over-whelmed—6. my *soul* thirsteth after thee.—7. my *spirit* faileth:—8.

I lift

I lift up my *soul* unto thee.—12. destroy all them that afflict my *soul*. *Luke* i. 46, 47. my *soul* doth magnify the Lord, and my *spirit* hath rejoiced. *1 Thess.* vi. 23. I pray God your whole *spirit*, and *soul*, and body be preserved blameless. *Heb.* iv. 12. the word of God is quick—piercing even to the dividing asunder of *soul* and *spirit* :—which takes in what is termed both the *sensitive* and *rational* soul. vid. *Pierce* in *Heb.* iv. 12. Comp. *Krebsij Nov. Lex.* in *Voc.* *ψυχα* et *ψηχη*.

In these several senses do the words above, and some others usually substituted for them, (such as *τον πραερδια*, *τον ιερον*, *τον ρημα*, *τον viscera*, *καρδια*, *θυμος*, *νεσ*, *φρεν*, *πνευμα*, with their derivatives and compounds) occur in Holy Scripture: and in many places they are figuratively applied to the Deity.—The words *νη* and *ψυχα* stand often also,

IX. For the HOLY GHOST and his gifts.

See Dr. Edwards's *Doctrine of Irresistible Grace*, c. 2. a book well worth the perusal of all those, who would be masters of the Scripture language.

X. For good and evil ANGELS; as may be seen in any Concordance, or Lexicon.

But neither do these words, nor any other, so far as I can find, ever stand for a purely immaterial principle in man; or a *substance* (whatever some may imagine they mean by that word) wholly separable from, and independent of the body; as may perhaps appear

appear more fully, when we examine the passages usually cited for that purpose.

I proceed, in the next place, to consider what account the Scriptures give of that state to which death reduces us. And this we find represented by *sleep*; by a negation of all *life*, *thought*, or *action*; by *rest*, *resting-place*, or *home*; *silence*, *oblivion*, *darkness*, *destruction* or *corruption*.

I. SLEEP.

First, in the case of *good men*. *Deut.* xxxi. 16.—*the Lord said unto Moses*, Behold, thou shalt *sleep* with thy fathers. *1 Kings* i. 21.—when my lord the king shall *sleep* with his fathers. ii. 10. So *David slept* with his fathers. xi. 43. *Solomon*. xv. 24. *A薩 xxii. 50. Jehoshaphat*. *2 Kings* xv. 7. *Azariah*. v. 38. *Jotham*. So *2 Chron.* ix. 31. xiv. 1. xvi. 13. *xxi. 1. xxvi. 23. xxvii. 9. xxxii. 33.*

Job iii. 13, 14. For now should I have *lien* still and been quiet, I should have *slept*; then had I been at rest; with kings and counsellors of the earth. vii. 21.—Why dost thou not pardon my transgression? for now shall I *sleep* in the dust. xiv. 11, 12. As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up; so man lieth down and riseth not, till the Heavens be no more; they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their *sleep*. (vid. *Cleric.*) *Ps. xiii. 3.*—lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the *sleep* of death. *Ps. xvii. 3.*—Thou hast visited me in the *night*, thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing. 15.—I shall be satisfied,

satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness. *Chald.* Par. *Matt.* xxvii. 52.—the graves were opened, and many bodies of saints that slept, arose. *John* xi. 11.—our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. 13.—Jesus spake of his death. *Acts* vii. 60.—And when he had said this, he fell asleep. xiii. 36.—*David*, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers. 1 *Cor.* xv. 6.—He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once: of whom the greater part remain—but some are fallen asleep.—18. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished.—20.—now is Christ—become the first-fruits of them that slept.—51.—we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. 1 *Theff.* iv. 13.—I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep.—14.—them—which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.—15.—we which are alive—shall not prevent them that are asleep. v. 10. who died for us, that whether we wake, or sleep, we should live together with him. 2 *Pet.* iii. 4.—since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were.

Secondly, In the case of bad men. 1 *Kings* xiv. 20. *Jeroboam*—slept with his fathers. So—31. of *Rehoboam*. xvi. 6. *Baaشا*—28. *Omri*. xxii. 40. *Abab*. 2 *Kings* viii. 24. *Joram*. x. 35. *Jehu*. xiii. 9. *Jehoahaz*.—13. *Joash*. xiv. 16. *Jeroboam*.—29. *Menahem*. xv. 22. *Abaz*. xvi. 20. *Manasseh*. xxi. 18. *Jeboiakim*. xxiv. 6. So 2 *Chron.* xii. 16. xxvii. 9.

xxxiii. 20. *Jer.* li. 39.—I will make them drunken, that they may—sleep a perpetual *sleep*, and not wake. 1 *Cor.* xi. 30. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many *sleep*.

Thirdly, In the case of *all* men. *Dan.* xii. 2. Many of them that *sleep* in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, &c. Compare *John* v. 28, 29.—the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their *graves* shall hear his voice, and shall *come forth*; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, &c.

II. Death is represented by a negation of all LIFE, THOUGHT, or ACTION; even to good men.

Job iii. 11. Why died I not from the womb?—13. for now should I have *lied still*.—16. as an hidden *untimely birth*, I had not been; as infants which *never saw light*. xiv. 10. Man dieth—and where is he?—14. If a man die, shall he *live again*? [vid. *Chappelow*, on v. 12.] *Ps.* vi. 5.—in death there is no remembrance of thee. xxx. 9. What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? shall the *dust* praise thee? lxxxviii. 10, 11, 12. Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee? shall thy loving kindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in *destruction*? shall thy wonders be known in the *dark*? and thy righteousness in the land of *forgetfulness*? cxv. 17. The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into *silence*. cxlvii. 4. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his *thoughts* perish

ish. *Eccles.* ix. 5.—the dead know not any thing.—6.—their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now perished.—10. there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest. *H.* xxxviii. 18.—the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee ; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. 19. The living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day. *Acts* ii. 34.—*David* is not ascended into the Heavens, &c.

III. Death is represented as a REST, and the Grave a RESTING PLACE, HOUSE, or HOME.

Job iii. 11. Why died I not?—13.—then had I been at rest.—17. there the weary be at rest.—18. there the prisoners rest together ; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. xvii. 13.—the grave is mine house.—16. they shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust. *Eccles.* xii. 5.—man goeth to his long home.—7. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was ; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. [vid. *Cleric.*] *H.* xiv. 18. All the kings of the nations—lie in glory, every, one in his own house. lvii. 2. They shall rest in their beds ; namely, every one that walketh [or rather, hath walked] in his uprightness. *Rev.* xiv. 13. That they rest from their labours.

IV. A state of SILENCE.

I Sam. ii. 9. He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness. *Ps.* xxxi.

17.—let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave. xciv. 17. Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence. cxv. 17. in sect. ii. *Jer.* xlvi. 2.—come, and let us cut it off from being a nation ; also thou shalt be cut down (in the margin, be brought to silence.) *Ezek.* xxxii. 25. They have set her a bed in the midst of the slain with all her multitude : her graves are found about him : all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword : though their terror was caused in the land of the living ;—Add 27, &c.

V. Of OBLIVION. *Ps.* vi. 5. lxxxviii. 12. as above, sect. ii.

VI. Of DARKNESS.

1 *Sam.* ii. 9. as above, sect. iv. *Job* iii. 5. Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it, (*viz.* the day of his birth.) x. 21. Before I go to the land of darkness, and the shadow of death.—22. A land of darkness, as darkness itself, and of the shadow of death ; without any order, and where the light is as darkness. xii. 22. He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death. xvii. 13.—the grave is mine house ; I have made my bed in darkness. xxxiii. 28. He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. *Ps.* xliv. 19. Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death. [Add xlix. 19. in sect.

vii. *Psl.* lxxxviii. 12. as above, sect. ii.] cvii. 16. Such as sit in *darkness*, and in the shadow of death. Add v. 14. *Eccles.* xi. 8.—if a man live many years—yet let him remember the days of *darkness*, for they shall be many. *John* ix. 4. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the *night* cometh, when no man can work.

VII. Of CORRUPTION AND DESTRUCTION.

Job iv. 18, 19, 20.—He put no trust in his servants,—how much less in them that dwell in houses of clay; whose foundation is in the dust; which are crushed before the moth? they are *destroyed* from morning to evening; they are *perished* for ever. xxvi. 6. Hell is naked before him, and *destruction* hath no covering. xxviii. 22. *Destruction* and death say, we have heard the fame thereof. *Psl.* xvi. 10.—thou—wilt not suffer thine Holy One to see *corruption*. xl ix. 9. That he should still live for ever; and not see *corruption*.—12.—man being in honour, *abideth not*.—14. like sheep they are laid in the grave, death shall *feed* on them,—their beauty shall *consume* in the grave from their dwelling.—19. He (Heb. His *soul*) shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall *never see light*.—20. Man that is in honour and understandeth not, is like the beasts that *perish*. lxxxviii. 11. Shall thy loving kindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in *destruction*? (vid. *Clericum*, qui recte deducit *Rephaim*, mortuos, a *rapha* defecit,

defecit, desit.) Add *Prov.* xv. 1. xxvii. 20. *Acts* xiii. 36. *David*.—was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption. *1 Cor.* xv. 18. Then they also that are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished. vid. *Hallet*, Disc. Vol. I. p. 313, &c. Comp. *2 Pet.* ii. 1.

Agreeably to these representations of our state *in death*, revelation informs us,

I. That we shall not *awake*, or be made *alive*, till the *resurrection*. *Ps.* xvii. 15.—I shall be satisfied, when I *awake*, with thy likeness. *John* vi. 39. This is the Father's will—that of all which he hath given me, I should *lose* nothing; but should *raise it up* again at the last day. xi. 24, 25, 26. I am the *resurrection* and the *life*; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he *live*; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die. [whosoever *liveth*, or is *alive at that day*. Comp. *1 Thess.* iv. 15.] This we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not *prevent* them which are asleep. And *1 Cor.* xv. 51, 52.—we shall not all *sleep*, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump. *Rom.* iv. 17.—he believed—God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not, as though they were.

II. That the wicked shall not be *severed* from the righteous till the *resurrection*, the *end of the world*,
the

the *coming*, or *day of Christ*, the *day of the Lord*, THE day, THAT day, &c.

Matt. xiii. 30. Let both grow together until the harvest : and in the *time of harvest*, I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them : but gather the wheat into my barn.—40. As the tares are gathered, and burnt in the fire ; so shall it be in the *end of this world*.—41. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity.—49. and sever the wicked from among the just. xxiv. 31.—He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of Heaven to the other. xxv. 31, 32. When the Son of man shall come in his glory—before him shall be gathered all nations ; and he shall *separate* them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. Add *Mark* xiii. 26, 27.

III. We are upon trial, or in a state of probation, till the resurrection, or the day of Christ.

1 *Cor.* i. 8. in sect. xi. *Phil.* i. 10. That ye may be sincere, and without offence till the day of Christ.

1 *Theff.* v. 23.—I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 *Tim.* vi. 14. That thou

keep

keep this commandment without spot, unrebutable, until the *appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ.* *Tit. ii. 12, 13.*—denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world ; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious *appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* *Heb. x. 35, 36, 37.* Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For yet a little while, and he that shall *come,* will *come,* and will not tarry. *Ja. i. 12.* Blessed is the man that endureth temptation : for when he is *tried,* he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. *v. 7.* Be patient, therefore, brethren, *unto the coming of the Lord.* *1 Pet. i. 7.* That the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, *at the appearing of Jesus Christ.*—*13.*—Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope to the end ; for the grace that is to be brought to you *at the revelation of Jesus Christ.* *2 Pet. iii. 11, 12.* Looking for, and hastening unto the *coming of the day of God* ; wherein the Heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.—*14.* Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be *found of him in peace ; without spot, and blameless.* *Rev. ii. 25.*—that which ye have already, hold fast till I come.

IV.

Cc 2

IV. Our *Christian course*, and *improvements in piety* in this world, terminate in the *resurrection*, the *coming*, or *day* of our Lord.

Phil. i. 6. Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it *until the day of Jesus Christ.* iii. 10, 11. That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffering, being made conformable unto his death, if by any means I might attain unto the *resurrection of the dead*; or, that any way I may attain unto the resurrection, i. e. of the *just.* iv. 5. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The *Lord is at hand.* 1 *Theff.* iii. 13.—to the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness, before God, even our Father, at the *coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*, with all his saints, v. 23. as above, sect. iii. See also in the same sect. 1 *Tim.* vi. 14. *Tit.* ii. 12, 13. *Ja.* v. 7. 1 *Pet.* i. 7, 13. 2 *Pet.* iii. 11, 12.

V. The elect shall not be *gathered together* till the *resurrection*, &c.

Matt. xxiv. 31. *Mark* xiii. 26, 27. as above, sect. ii. 2 *Theff.* ii. 1.—we beseech you, brethren, by the *coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and by our *gathering together unto him.*

VI. The world shall not be *judged* before the *resurrection*, &c.

Matt.

Matt. xvi. 27.—the Son of man shall come, in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and *then* he shall reward every man according to his works. *John xii. 48.* He that rejecteth me,—the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the *last day*. *Acts xvii. 31.*—he hath appointed a *day*, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained. *Rom. ii. 16.* In the *day* when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. *1 Cor. iii. 13, 14, 15.* Every man's work shall be made manifest. For the *day* shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a *reward*. If any man's work shall be burnt, he shall suffer *loss*. *iv. 5.*—judge nothing before the time, *until the Lord come*, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and *then* shall every man have praise of God. *2 Tim. iv. 1.*—the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his *appearing*. *Heb. vi. 1, 2.* the doctrine—of a resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. *Rev. xx. 12, 13, 14, 15.*—I saw the dead, small and great stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death

and

and hell delivered up the dead which were in them : and they were *judged* every man according to his works.

VII. Sincere Christians shall not have *boldness*, or *confidence*, before Christ, till the resurrection, &c.

I John ii. 28.—Little children, abide in him ; that when he shall *appear*, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his *coming*. iv. 17. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the *day of judgment*.

VIII. The virtuous shall not be *rewarded* till the resurrection, &c.

Matt. xiii. 43. *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.* xix, 28.—ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall *sit in the throne of his glory*, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of *Israel*. xxv. 19, 20, 21. After a long time, the lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents, came and brought other five talents. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant ;—*enter thou into the joy of thy lord.*—So 23.—34. *Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*—46.—these (the wicked) shall go away in-

to everlasting punishment : but the righteous into life eternal. Luke xiv. 14—thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. John v. 28, 29—the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; vi. 40.—This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life : and *I will raise him up at the last day*—44. No man can come to me, except the Father—draw him : and *I will raise him up at the last day*.—54. whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, *and I will raise him up at the last day*. xvi. 22. Ye now have sorrow : but I will *see you again*, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. Acts iii. 19. Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, *when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord*. 1 Cor. v. 5. To deliver such an one unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. 2 Cor. i. 14.—we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours, in the day of our Lord Jesus. v. 2, 3, 4.—we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from Heaven. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened : not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon ; that mortality might be swallowed up of life. (Comp. 1 Cor. xv. 52, 53, 54.—the dead shall be raised

raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed : For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.—Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.) *Eph.* iv. 30.—grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. *Rev.* xi. 18.—thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged ; and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints.

IX. They shall not have *eternal life*, or *salvation* ; shall not put on *immortality* ; be received unto Christ ; enter into his joy ; behold his *glory*, or be like him ; till the *resurrection*, &c.

John vi. 54. as above in sect. viii.—xiv. 2, 3. In my Father's house are many mansions.—I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will *come again*, and receive you unto myself, that where I am ye may be also. xvii. 24. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me, where I am ; that they may behold my *glory* which thou hast given me. *Acts* iii. 20, 21. Jesus Christ—whom the Heaven must receive, until the times of *restitution* of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets. *Rom.* vi. 5.—if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his *resurrection*. viii. 11.—if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you ; he that raised Christ from the dead shall also quicken

quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit, that dwelleth in you.—17.—if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also *glorified together*.—18. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the *glory* that shall be revealed in us.—19. For the earnest expectation of the creature, waiteth for the *manifestation* of the sons of God.—23.—not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit: even we ourselves, groan within ourselves; waiting for the adoption, to wit, the *redemption of our body*. Add 1 Cor. xv. 52, 53, 54. as above, sect. viii. Phil. iii. 20, 21. For our conversation is in Heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. Col. iii. 4.—when Christ who is our life shall *appear*, then shall ye also appear with him in *glory*. 1 Thess. ii. 19.—What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, at his coming. iv. 14, 15, 16, 17. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which *sleep in Jesus*, will God *bring with him*. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent or precede them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together

gether with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 2 Thess. i. 6, 7. It is a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven.—10. when he shall come to be glorified in the saints, and to be admired of all them that believe—in that day. 2 Tim. i. 18. The Lord grant unto him, that he may find mercy of the Lord, in that day. iv. 8. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness; which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only; but unto all them that love his appearing. Heb. ix. 28.—Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him, shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation. 1 Pet. iv. 13.—rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. v. 4.—when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. 1 John iii. 2.—Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

X. They, their faith, labours, and sufferings, are lost, perished, unprofitable; if there be no resurrection.

John

John vi. 39, &c. as above, sect. i. p. 396. *1 Cor.* xv. 18. Then, (*i. e.* if Christ be not raised) they also which are fallen asleep in Christ, are *perished*. [Comp. *Pſ.* cxlvi. 4. and *Eccles.* ix. 6.] 32.—If after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at *Ephesus*; what *advantageth* it me, if the *dead rise not?*—58. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not *in vain, in the Lord*. [This supposes, that all their labour *in the Lord* would be *in vain*, if no *resurrection*.] Therefore,

XI. The *resurrection* is the grand object of our *faith, hope, and comfort*.

Acts xxiii. 6.—*Paul* cried out—of the *hope and resurrection of the dead*, I am called in question. xxiv. 15. I—have hope towards God,—that there shall be a *resurrection of the dead*, both of the just and unjust. *1 Cor.* i. 7, 8. Ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall also confirm you unto the end; that ye may be blameless *in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ*. *2 Cor.* i. 9. But we had the sentence of death *in ourselves*, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which *raiseth the dead*. iv. 10. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus; that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.—14. Knowing, that he which raised up the Lord

Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also, by Jesus. *Phil. iii. 11.* If by any means I might attain unto the *resurrection of the dead*. Add 20, 21. as above, sect. ix. *1 Thess. i. 9, 10.*—ye turned to God from Idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his *Son from Heaven*. iv. 17, 18. Then we which are alive and remain, shall be *caught up* together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. *2 Thess. ii. 13.* as above, sect. ix. iii. 5.—the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. *2 Tim. i. 12.*—I know whom I have believed; and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, *against that day*. ii. 18. Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. *Tit. ii. 13.* as above, sect. iv. *Heb. xi. 35.* Women received their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection. *1 Pet. i. 3, 4, 5.* Blessed be God—which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the *resurrection* of Jesus Christ from the dead; to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in Heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through *faith* unto salvation; ready to be revealed in the *last time*. See v. 13. above in sect. iv. *2 Pet. iii. 13.*

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Never-

Nevertheless we, according to his promise, *look for new Heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.* 1 John iii. 2. see in sect. ix. above.—v. 3. every man that *hath this hope in him* (of a resurrection) purifieth himself, even as he is pure. Rev. i. 9. I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. (ἐν Βαριλεω, ἐγώ ἵππος τοῦ Ιησοῦ Χριστοῦ.) Vid. Grot.

XII. The wicked will not be *punished till the resurrection.*

Matt. vii. 22, 23. Many will say to me *in that day*, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name?—and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. x. 15.—it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for that city. Add xi. 22. xii. 36.—every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof, in the day of judgment. xxv. 41. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.—46.—these shall go away into everlasting punishment. Mark viii. 38. Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words;—of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels. Luke x. 12.—it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than

than for that city. See *John v. 28, 29.* in sect. viii. *John xii. 48.* He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him *in the last day.* *Rom. ii. 5, 6.*—But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thy self wrath against the *day of wrath,* and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds. *2 Thess. i. 7, 8, 9.* When the Lord Jesus shall be *revealed from Heaven*—in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God;—who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. *2 Pet. ii. 9.* The Lord knoweth how—to *reserve* the unjust unto the *day of judgment* to be punished. *iii. 7.*—the Heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store; *reserved* unto fire against the *day of judgment,* and perdition of ungodly men. *Jude 14, 15.*—Behold, the Lord *cometh* with ten thousands of his saints; to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. *Rev. i. 7.* Behold, he *cometh* with clouds; and every eye shall see him; and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. *vi. 16, 17.* And they said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on

us,

us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great *day of his wrath* is come, and who shall be able to stand?

XIII. All this plainly shews, that the Scripture, in speaking of the connection between our present and future being, doth not take into the account our *intermediate state in death*; no more than we, in describing the course of any man's actions, take in the time he sleeps.

Therefore the Scriptures (to be consistent with themselves) must affirm an immediate connection between *death* and *judgment*. *Heb. ix. 27.*—It is appointed unto men once to die, but *after this the judgment*. See *2 Cor. v. 6, 8.* in *Objections*.

XIV. For this reason the Scriptures represent the coming of *Christ* as *near at hand*.

Rom. xiii. 12. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. *Phil. iv. 5.*—the Lord is at hand. *Jam. v. 8.*—the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. *9.*—the judge standeth before the door. *Rev. xxii. 7.*—Behold, I come quickly. *12.*—I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.—*20.* He which testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly.

XV. Also that *he, his day*, will come suddenly, as a snare, a thief, upon all the world; and we are cautioned

tioned to *watch, and be sober*, that it surprize us not unprepared.

Luke xii. 40. Be ye therefore ready also; for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye *think not*.
xxi. 34.—take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you *unawares*. 35.—for as a *snare* shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36.—*Watch* ye therefore, and pray always; that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. *Phil. iv. 5.* See above. 1 *Theff. v. 2.* For yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh as a *thief in the night*. 6.—Therefore let us not sleep as do others; but let us *watch and be sober*. 2 *Pet. iii. 10.*—the day of the Lord will come as a *thief in the night*.—12. *looking for and hastening unto* the day of the Lord. *Rev. iii. 3.*—If therefore thou shalt not *watch*, I will come on thee as a *thief*, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. *Rev. xxii. 12. 20.* See above, sect. XIV.

OBJECTIONS, or Texts usually alledged to prove the contrary doctrine.

I. The dead are said to *speak and act*. *Isai. v. 14.*
ib. xiv. 9, 10. Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised

raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us? *Ezek.* xxxii. 21. The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell with them that help him: they are gone down, they lie uncircumcised, slain by the sword, &c.

Answ. This is a strong, but very natural and elegant *Prosopopœia*; of which more under *Prop.* xii. and xxvii.

II. *Gen.* ii. 7. Man became a *living soul*.

Answ. i. e. A living person. *Gen.* vii. 22. All in whose nostrils was the *breath of life*, of all that was in the dry land, died. *1 Cor.* xv. 47. The first man is of the earth, *earthy*.

III. Persons are said to *go*, or be *gathered* to their people, or fathers; or to *go down* to them, or to their children, into *Sheol*. *Gen.* xv. 15. Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace. xxxvii. 35.—I will go down into the grave unto my son, mourning.

Answ. These phrases, since they are used of whole generations; (*Judges* ii. 10.) as also of men who led very different lives; or, which in this case comes to the same thing, different from their respective ancestors; (as in the former text) and whose bodies were disposed of in a different manner; (as in the latter)

or deposited in places very remote from each other ; (as in both cases) can only mean the general state of *the dead* ; in which they are as often said to sleep with their fathers, &c. to resort *ad plures*. Vid. *Cleric.* in *Gen.* xv. 15. *xxxvii.* 35. *Patrick* on *2 Kings xxiv.* 6. *Whitby* in *Acts ii.* 26, 27. *Barrow* on Christ's descent into hell. Vol. I. p. 557.

IV. *Exod.* iii. 6. . I am the God of thy father, the God of *Abraham*, the God of *Isaac*, and the God of *Jacob*. Vid. *infra ad Luke xx.* 38. p. 418.

V. *1 Sam.* xxviii. 14, &c. *Saul* and the Witch of *Endor*.

Ansiv. That this account of *Samuel*'s, appearance was merely an imposition upon *Saul*, from whose attendants the old woman might learn his present circumstances, and desperate situation, and thence be able to foretell his fate, without such a pretended information from the Prophet's Ghost ;—and that *Saul* himself really saw nothing all the while, but judg'd of the whole transaction from the woman's story, which was framed in conformity to his own superstitious prejudices, See *Le Clerc.* Though we must own with this judicious commentator, that such a silly lying practice as that of *necromaney*, did indeed imply the vulgar opinion of a separate existence, and that it commonly prevailed amongst the *Jews*, (nor might the historian himself, perhaps be altogether free from a tincture of the same prejudice.) Notwithstanding that

that all such instances of superstition were condemned both by the law and prophets. *Isai.* viii. 19. And when they shall say unto you, seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter; should not a people seek unto their God?—for the living to the dead?—*An pro vivis ibimus ad mortuos?*—qui nihil norunt de iis quæ apud vivos fiunt. *Cleric.* ib. Another solution may be seen in Dr. S. Clarke, Serm. lxxxv. p. 571. fol. *Dubl.* ed. The gross absurdity of the common interpretation is demonstrated in *Chandler's Life of David.* B. 2. c. 16. Comp. *Young.* *Diff. on Idolatry.* v. 2. p. 37. &c.

VI. 1 *Kings xvii. 21, 22.* And he stretched himself upon the child three times,—and said, O Lord, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again.—And the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.

Answ. The soul here signifies *life*, or perhaps *vigour*. *Redeat in viscera ejus.* *Heb. Par. Chald. et Syr.* Comp. 1 *Sam. xxx. 12.*—When he had eaten his *Spirit* came to him again. Add *Jud. xv. 19.*

VII. *Psal. xxxi. 5.* Into thine hand I commend my spirit.

Answ. *Spirit*, can only mean *life*, as the author treats of nothing there but temporal adversity. ver. 7.—thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities.

VIII. *Eccles.* iii. 21. Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward ; and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth ?

i. Who knows the difference between them ?

Ans^w. No body. For ver. 19.—that which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth beasts ; even one thing befalleth them ; as the one dieth, so dieth the other ; yea, they have all one breath. ver. 20. All go unto one place, all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.

Or 2. If the two foregoing verses be the objection of an atheist (as is supposed by the judicious writer mentioned below. p. 436.) then (as he also observes) these words contain the answer, ‘ and imply, *Who knows this ? How can any man be sure of that ? It is evident, the spirit of man is ascending upwards* (is fitted for, and has a tendency towards things which are above this earth ; and therefore must be designed by its Creator for things superior to the mere animal life) *but the spirit of a beast is descending downwards* ; namely to the earth ; (grovels upon the earth, and is wholly confined to the low, animal, sensitive life;) it is therefore evident man must have pre-eminence over a beast.’

IX. *Eccles.* xii. 7. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was : and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

Ans^w.

Answ. By *spirit*, the preacher can only mean *life*, in allusion to *Gen.* iii. 19. (In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground ; for out of it wast thou taken ; for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return)—unless we make him contradict all that he had said before, iii. 19, 20. as also, ix. 5.—the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more reward.—10. there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, &c.—That such words mean no more in other writers, Vid. *Cleric in loc.* and *Job* xxiv. 14. If he set his heart upon man, if he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath.—And that this author refers all to the *last judgment*. Vid. ver. *ult.* God shall bring every work unto judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Comp. Dr. *Dawson's* answer to *Steffe's* argument drawn from the two foregoing texts, in two letters annexed to his lady *Moyer's* lecture, p. 249, &c.

X. *Matt.* x. 28. Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul : (after that have no more that they can do. *Luke* xii. 4.) but rather fear him, which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell.

Answ. This is so far from proving such a distinction between soul and body as implies any separate existence of the former from the latter ; or its being capable of suffering in an intermediate state ; that it

seems only intended to point out the great distinction between this and the next Life ; when, in the common language, soul and body are reunited, and future punishments commence, to the *everlasting destruction of both, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his Power.* 2 Thess. i. 9. Comp. 1 Cor. v. 5. and 2 Pet. ii. 9. and sect. V. p. 381. It may be observed here once for all, that when Christ uses the common distinction of Soul and Body, he may be conceived to adapt himself wholly to the popular language and ideas, without giving any confirmation to the *truth and justness* of them; as when he says, *a spirit, (i. e. according to your own notion of it) hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.* Luke xxiv. 39. without determining the reality of such a phantom : which popular way of speaking, used then on all occasions as the most agreeable and most intelligible, should be more carefully attended to by us, in order to guard against all such chimeras as are too often grounded on it. In the same popular manner do the Evangelists treat some of *Christ's* miraculous works, when they describe them just according to the vulgar apprehension ; v. g. Luke vi. 19. *There went virtue out of him to heal them all*—and Mark v. 30. *Jesus immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned himself about in the press, and said, who touched my cloaths?* intending to denote his consciousness of the infirm person's wanting to be cured in a private way, and accordingly making use of the superstitious

pernicious means, vulgarly deemed effectual to that purpose, of secretly touching some of his garments; which desire of her's, Christ was determined to comply with (till he had opportunity of producing her in publick) and thereby instantly rewarded her faith in his miraculous power, notwithstanding the improper manner in which she had been induced to solicit it, as if such healing virtue could have been produced in, or elicited from Christ either magically or mechanically, and without his knowledge. Vid. *Cleric. et Grot.* in loc. and Comp. *Acts* v. 15. where the common people entertain a like opinion of St. Peter's shadow. *Loca, quæ aut inter se aut veritati nobis repugnare videntur, commode plerumque conciliari possunt, si dicamus, Scriptorem sacrum non suam sententiam ubique expressisse, et dixisse quid res sit; sed aliquando ex sententia aliorum aut ex vulgi opinione, &c.* *Wetsten N. T. V. II. p. 877* This rule of interpretation may be applied to many other points beside those mentioned by that author.

The same observation has been made on the vulgar notion of *possessions* by devils so very prevalent among the Jews about Christ's time; where he really cures each disorder without controverting their opinions on the subject (which would have been endless, and answered no good purpose) but rather allows and argues from them occasionally, *ad homines*; casts out these supposed devils, as the Jews themselves frequently attempted to do, and is said to rebuke them,

(*Mark i. 25.*) in the same manner as he *rebukes a fever* (*Luke iv. 19.*) or the *winds and sea*. *Matt. viii. 26.* See Dr. *Harwood's* judicious observations on the Demoniacs. New Introd. to the N. T. C. 7. § 1. On the same principle also several parables seem to be founded, as that of the rich man and *Lazarus*, below No. xii. that of *unclean spirits walking through dry* (or *desert*) *places*; and numbers of them *entering into one man, and dwelling there*. *Matt. xii. 45.* *Luke xi. 26.* Comp. Mr. *Farmer* on the *Demoniacs* pafs.

XI. *Matt. xvii. 3.*—there appeared unto them *Moses* and *Elias* talking with him.

Answ. 1. This is either merely a vision (ver. 9.—Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the *vision* to no man) which confounded the apostles: *Luke ix. 33.*—Or 2. These two might appear in their own glorified bodies; since it is not very clear whether *Moses* also might not have been *translated*, or rather *raised again*. Vid. *Whitby*, ib. and in *Jude 9.* & *Cleric.* in *Deut. xxxiv. 6.* & in *2 Kings ii. 11.* or *Fleming's Christology*, p. 68, &c.

XII. *Luke xvi. 19, &c.* The parable of the rich man and *Lazarus*.

Answ. This is designed for no more than a general scenical description of a future state, and the real changes consequent thereupon; without any particular

cular reference to a fact, in either person, time, place, or other circumstances: And in these respects adapted (as is usual in such discourses) to the *inconsistent* notions of the vulgar on this subject. (Vid. *Cleric.* in ver. 23, 24.) *v. g.* the tormented person is at the same time supposed to be both *in* and *out of* the body,—ver. 24. send *Lazarus* that he may dip the *tip of his finger in water*, and cool my *tongue*.—As when men are feigned to discourse, &c. among *worms* in the grave. *Isa.* xiv. 9, 10, 11. Vid. *Cleric. Ezek.* xxxii. 21. and lay their *swords* under their *heads* there, ib. ver. 27. See *Lightf. Hor. Heb.* in loc. & comp. *Job* xv. 22. xxi. 32, 33. with *Chappelow's* commentary. They who can still conceive such representations as realities, may easily go one step farther, and give a literal sense likewise to the verse immediately foregoing, *Isa.* xiv. 8. The fir-trees *rejoice* at thee, and the cedars of *Lebanon*; *saying*, since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us. This has actually been done to the parallel place in *Ezek.* xxi. 14,—17. which (with some other texts as little to the purpose) is brought to prove a separate state. *Universal Restoration*, p. 272. n. t. A different explanation of this parable may be seen in *Bate's Rationale of Or. Sin*, c. xiii. § 6.

XIII. *Luke* xx. 38.—He is not the *God of the dead*, but of the *living*.

Answ. He cannot be called the *God of such as be*

be *finally* dead ; but being still *in covenant* with these, (*Heb.* xi. 16.—God is not ashamed to be called *their God* : *for he hath prepared for them a city.*) they in effect live to him. (*Rom.* iv. 17.—who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not, as though they were. See *Parry's Defence of Bp. Sherlock*, p. 77.) though not to *themselves*, or to *one another* : if they did, our blessed Saviour's proof of a *resurrection* from thence, would be utterly destroyed. Vid. *Whitby* on *Matt.* xxii. 31. or the *Library*. No. 14. They are the *Children of the Resurrection*, *Luke* xx. 36. and as sure of a future life, as if already in possession of it : in the same manner as Christ is termed *the Lord both of the dead and living*, *Rom.* xiv. 9. and as he says to the penitent thief ;—

XIV. *Luke* xxxiii. 43.—*To-day* shalt thou be with me in paradise.—

Answ. *To-day* thou art certain of a place with me in Heaven; 'tis a thing already done and determined : the words *to-day* being constantly used of any matter then fixed, settled or declared ; tho' not to commence some months, or even ages after. *Gen.* iii. 17.—*in the day* that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.—*Deut.* ix. 1. Hear, O *Israel*, thou art to pass over Jordan *this day*. xxix. 13. That he may establish thee *to-day* for a people unto him. *Psal.* ii. 7.—Thou art my son, *this day* have I begotten thee. Comp. *Acts* xiii. 33. and *Heb.* v. 5. with *Sykes* on

on *Heb. App. i.* p. 244. The same may be observed
of *νηστος, Cras.*

I shall add another interpretation of these words, from the judicious author mentioned at the end of this *Appendix*; though it take up a little more room than I was willing to allow myself. ‘The thief on the cross, I make no doubt, was acquainted with Christ, and had heard him often preach. For he could say, This man has done *εδιν αποκρινοι, nothing amiss*; nothing inconsistent with his pretensions as *Messiah*. Probably he had been one of his followers; and heard such discourses from him, as *John vi.* declaring what he had to give was *eternal life*, after the resurrection. This did not suit the temporal expectations of many of his followers, who then left him. After he had left Christ, pursuing his carnal scheme, he fell in with robbers; was taken, cast into prison; and then, having done with all earthly hopes, he begun to reflect upon, and relish what he had heard from Christ: but retaining still a part of his *Jewish* errors concerning the *Messiah’s* kingdom, (like the mother of Zebedee’s children) he imagined Christ could do nothing till he was in actual possession of his kingdom. *Lord, remember me when thou comest into (or in) thy kingdom,* (*εν επιστρησει σου*, Comp. *Matt. xvi. 28.*) and see if any thing can be done in favour of a poor wretch! Our Lord answers, You need not suspend your hopes till then; even *at present*, and in my low circumstances,

stances, I have authority to *assure* you that you shall have a place with me in paradise; not in an *earthly kingdom*, but in paradise; the word by which the Jews most familiarly and distinctly expressed the future state of blessedness.' *I say unto thee this day, thou shalt, &c.* For this last reading, see *Coteler.* Vet. Mon. Tom. III. or *Bowyer* in loc.

XV. *Luke xxiv. 39.*—handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

Answ. Alluding to the vulgar notion of *apparitions*, as above, v. 37.—they were terrified, and *supposed* they had seen a spirit.

XVI. *Acts i. 25.*—from which *Judas* by transgression fell, that he might go to his own *place*;
εἰς τὴν τοπὸν τοῦ ιδίου.

Answ. 1. Some put *& is πατέρων Iudas*, in a parenthesis: for which reading, see the authorities in *Bowyer's N. Test. Comp. Harwood Not.* in loc. et *Kyrke Obs. Sac.*

2. If spoken of *Judas*, it may denote that state of punishment, to which his death consigned him; and which was to take place at the day of judgment.
2 *Theff. i. 9.* 2 *Pet. ii. 9.*—But what relation can a soul *uncloathed*, have to *place*?

XVII. *Acts vii. 59.*—they stoned *Stephen*, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus *receive my spirit.*

Answ.

Answ. i. e. my life. Col. iii. 3. With whom our life is hid in God. If life, either past or future, can be said to be hid with Christ; why may it not, by the same figure, be received by him, committed to, or deposited with, and kept by him; as in 2 Tim. i. 12. and 1 Pet. iv. 19?

XVIII. 2 Cor. v. 8.—willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

Answ. This is strictly true, since time unperceived making no distance, or difference in the case; the season of each person's recompence, really coincides with that of his death: (which is constantly allowed by those on the other side of the question, would they but as constantly remember, and abide by it) and therefore to be absent from our *natural* body, is to be cloathed with a *spiritual* one: to depart hence is to be with Christ. ib. v. 4. *we that are in this tabernacle do groan; being burdened; not for that we would be uncloathed, but cloathed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.*—That St. Paul hath no thought of an intermediate state, is plain from the first four verses. (We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens: For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be cloathed upon with our house which is from Heaven: if so be that being cloathed, we shall not be found naked, &c.) As also from v. 10. plainly referring

referring all to the general judgment. See this text together with the context, judiciously explained by Dr. Dawson at the end of his *Lady Moyer's Lect.* p. 267, &c. Comp. *Alexander's Paraphr.* on *1 Cor. xv.* p. 35, 36. who has demonstrated that the phrase *being absent from the body* can have no relation to an intermediate state, but rather denotes *the life of Saints after the Resurrection.*

The same reply serves for—

XIX. *Phil. i. 21,—24.*—to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain:—yet what I shall choose, I wot not: For I am in a strait betwixt two; having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you:

i. e. It would be better for me to be immediately released from all my labours; since this *to me* would be an immediate entrance *into the joy of my Lord*; though *to others*, who *abide in the flesh, that day* is at a distance; and at a greater distance from *each*, the longer he so abideth; notwithstanding that this great day (if we may be allowed to distinguish between time *relative*, and *absolute*) is in itself one and the *same to all*: neither shall they who die first in that sense, attain to it the soonest; nor shall they that remain alive *to the coming of the Lord, prevent, precede or anticipate them which are asleep.* *1 Thess. iv. 15.* That the Apostle could not be with Christ in any intermediate state, is fully made out by

Alexander

Alexander in his explanation of this passage, Paraphr. on 1 Cor. xv. p. 37, &c.

XX. 2 Cor. xii. 2. I knew a man in Christ—(whether in the body,—or whether out of the body, I cannot tell—) such an one caught up to the third heaven.

Answ. This is a vision, [v. 1.—I will come to visions, and revelations of the Lord,] in which, things were represented in so lively a manner, as to leave it doubtful, whether they had not been really seen and heard; in which he was *quasi raptus extra se*. vid. Philo, ap. Wetsten. in loc. and Farmer on Christ's Temptation. not. u. p. 21, 22. or Benson, Hist. of the first planting the Christ. Rel. V. ii. p. 7. 2d. ed.

XXI. Eph. iv. 9. Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first *into the lower parts of the earth?* *καὶ εἰς τὰ κατωτέρα της γῆς.*

Answ. i. e. at his incarnation. Vid. John iii. 13.—no man hath ascended up to Heaven, but he that came down from Heaven; even the Son of man which is in Heaven. viii. 23—ye are from beneath, I am from above; ye are of this world, I am not of this world.

XXII. 1 Pet. iii. 19. By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, *τοῖς ἐν φυλακῇ πενitουσιν.*

Answ. Some copies have *πενitουσιν*; the other reading refers only to the time of Noah, a preacher of righte-

righteousness to those *persons*, that were then *tied and bound with the chain of their sins*. Isa. xlvi. 7. To open the blind eyes, to bring out the *prisoners from the prison*, and them that sit in darkness, out of the prison-house. vid, Lowth, ib. lxi. 1. The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives; and the opening of the *prison*, to them that are bound. vid. Whitby, App. to Acts ii. 27.—That *πνεύματα* may mean only *persons*, as in 1 Tim. iv. 1. *προστιχότες πνεύματος πλησίον*, see No. I. above.

XXIII. 1 Pet. iv. 6. For this cause was the Gospel preached also to them that are dead.

Answ. i. e. to those who were *spiritually* dead, or *dead in trespasses and sins*. Ephes. ii. 1. ‘By the dead I would understand wicked persons, especially the wicked *heathen* referred to, v. 4. and who, v. 6. are said to *walk according to men in the flesh*.—So is the word used, Matt. viii. 22. Luke ix. 60. 1 Tim. v. 6. Rev. iii. 1. And ’tis particularly used concerning the *Gentiles*, Ephes. ii. 1, &c. and v. 14, and Col. ii. 13.’ Benson in loc.

XXIV. Heb. xi. 40. God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Answ. The word *τιμωρῶν*, here laid hold of to support

support the notion of some *imperfect* consciousness supposed to continue in an intermediate state rather makes for the contrary, since it implies that neither those famous worthies whom the Apostle had been speaking of, nor by consequence any others, who are *fallen asleep*, shall enjoy the benefit of their reward in any sense till they *awake* together at the *general resurrection*; parallel to 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 15. and those other texts produced above No. IX. Or it may signify the same as πληρωθεῖσαι, *Rev.* vi. 10. till their number be *completed* or *fulfilled*, which comes to the same thing, and is equally foreign to the present question.

XXV. *Heb.* xii. 13.—*to the spirits of just men made perfect*; πνεύματοι δικαιῶν πεπληρωμένων.

Anſw. Either ye shall have access to those who *have finished their course*, i. e. when they have access to God, after the final judgment;—or approach to the *disposition* of such as have attained to the height of holiness and virtue. *John* xvii. 23. 1 *John* iv. 17. For the latter sense of the word, see ſect. vii. No. 5, and 6. p. 391.

XXVI. *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Anſw. St. Jude did not mean that those wicked persons were then, and would be always burning in hell-fire. For he intimates that what they suffered,

was set forth to public view, and appeared to all, as an example, or specimen, of God's displeasure against vice. The fire which consumed *Sodom*, &c. might be called *eternal*, as it burned till it had utterly consumed them.—A fruitful plain was turned into *cinders*, and the vestiges, or marks and traces of that defolating judgment remained to that time; do yet remain; and are likely to remain to the end of this world. *Benson* in loc.

XXVII. *Rev.* vi. 9, 10.—when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice; saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth!

Answ. An elegant *prosopopœia*, where the lives of martyrs are represented as a sacrifice, acceptable to God, which from the *altar* calls for vengeance; like the blood of *Abel*. *Heb.* xii. 24. A like *prosopopœia* may be seen in *Ps.* xvi. 9. My *flesh* shall rest in *hope*. Vid. *Whitby* in *Acts* ii. 27. and Comp. No. I. p. 41⁶.

XXVIII. *Rev.* xiv. 13. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from *henceforth*;—that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.

Answ. *Anægri*, on which the stress is laid, may either

either be joined to the following word, as some copies have it; with our *English* margin: [from henceforth saith the spirit; yea] or to the foregoing one, *κατόπινοντος*; and so signify, from henceforth they may be deemed happy, who are removed from the evils coming on the earth, ver. 19, 20. parallel to *Numb.* xi. 15. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness. *2 Kings xxii. 20.*—I will gather thee unto thy fathers; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil, which I will bring upon this place. So *2 Chron.* xxxiv. 27, 28. *Eccles.* iv. 1, 2.—they had no comforter;—wherefore I praised the dead, that are already dead; more than the living, which are yet alive. *Isa.* lvii. 1, 2. none considering, that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace. Comp. *Wetsten* in loc.

This may serve for a specimen of such texts, as are usually alledged on the other side of the question; all which will, I believe, appear even from these short remarks upon them, to be either quite foreign to the point; or purely figurative; or lastly, capable of a clear, and easy solution, on the principle above-mentioned; viz. that the times of our death and resurrection, are really coincident. Nor can such ever fairly be opposed to the constant, obvious tenor of the sacred writings; and that number of plain, express passages already cited.

I only observe farther, that all *philosophical* arguments, for the contrary tenet, drawn from our notions of the *matter*, and urged against the possibility of life, thought, and agency being so connected with some portions of it as to constitute a *compound Being**, or mix'd person; are merely grounded on our *ignorance*; and will prove equally against known fact, and daily observation; in the production of various animals; [oviparous and vegetable ones particularly] (K); as against the *union* of two such heterogeneous parts.

* Bp. *Sherlock*, Disc. ii. p. 86. Disc. iii. p. 114.

(K) See *Ellis's Nat. Hist. of Corallines*; of *Sponges*, Ph. Transf. Vol. LV. XXXI. add Vol. LVII. Pt. ii. XL. and *Hughes's Animal Flower*. Nat. Hist. of *Barbadoes*, B. ix. p. 293, *Guertner's Urtica Marina*. *Phil. Transf.* Vol. LII. P. i. No. xiii. and *Bastier, de Zoophytis*, ib. No. xxi. p. 108. or *Bonnet, Sur les Corps Organisés*, *passim*. Comp. *Crantz's Hist. of Greenland*, B. iii. c. 3. l. 13. or *Spillanzain's Essay on Animal reproductions*: and a curious paper on the generation of *Aphides*. *Phil. Transf.* Vol. LXI. No. xxii. With *Diquemare's Essy on Sea Anemonies*, Ph. Transf. V. LXIII. Pt. ii. No. xxxviii.—and *Muller Hist. of Animals*, &c. *Leipsic* 1774, or a late account of the *Madrepore's Voyage to the Isle of France*. Lett. xxix. That the same observation may be carried much farther than is usually apprehended, see *Bononiens. Acad. Comment. Tom. II. Pt. i. p. 122, &c.* *De Frumento*.—But a more comprehensive view of this curious subject, may be had in Dr. *Watson's Essay on the Subjects of Chemistry*, printed A. D. 1771. Some perhaps may get a little insight into the nature of animal life by contemplating it as thus mixed and incorporated with the vegetable. Others may have a like view from considering the case of such persons as have been brought to life again after the lungs were collapsed, the circulation stopped, and to all ends and purposes the soul appear'd (as the phrase is) to have taken leave of its body. Vid. *Memoirs of the Dutch Society for recovering drowned persons*. The like may be inferred from some remarkable cases of long interrupted consciousness in various disorders, particularly that of six months mentioned by *Crouseaz*, and cited by Dr. *Beattie* [Essay on Truth, p. 83.]

heterogeneous principles, as those of our own mind and body, are supposed to be.

Try any of these arguments [*v. g.* that from *extension*, *divisibility*, or the *vis inertiae*,] and see whether such a parallel do not strictly hold :—whether these same *qualities*, or *powers*, may not be in such a manner united with the vital ones ; as to act on and influence each other ; full as well as the different *substances*, or *subjects* of them ;—whether the very same difficulties do not lie against a communication in each case ;—or whether the word **S U B S T A N C E S** helps any thing at all toward a solution of them (A). He

that

83,] though he produces it for a very different purpose, and appears throughout, like some others of his countrymen, entirely devoted to the old doctrine of abstract immaterial substances and their immutable identity, of innate senses, implanted instincts, &c. for want probably of having read any thing written lately on the present subject, which might, I apprehend, lead them to a more just, and natural way of philosophising.

(A) One of the most candid and ingenious advocates for an intermediate state, after he had judiciously exploded the Scholastick notion of *Substance* as wholly needless, [Watt's Logick, p. 14.] finds it convenient here again to introduce something like that, under the name of *principle*, in order to support his notion of the abstract, independent nature of the human soul ; by assigning one such principle for *life*, and a different one for *thought*, and *agency* ; and he might with equal propriety have assigned another for *vegetation*, *sensibility*, &c. and set up each of these on its own bottom, as a distinct existence ; or such as might be supposed to continue in a state of separation from all the rest. If this be not multiplying causes, without necessity : 'tis hard to say what is. I shall give the passage at length, not with any design of exposing that very worthy author ; but merely to shew the weakness and futility of such conjectures, as some of the best Philosophers are forced to adopt, while they are building new systems of pneumatology, to bolster up an old scholastick hypothesis ; and trying to ground these on some of the most popular expressions in a sacred writer.

* As

that carefully attends to the workings of nature, and sees from whence the various ideas rise in every being, and how oft the several classes of beings run into each other ; will not find very much weight in arguments founded upon ontological distinctions only. And were there a thousand such, all tending to establish an essential difference between these two existences ; at most they could only shew, that the former of them might possibly be conceived to subsist apart from the latter ; *i. e.* be sustained in a new manner, and with new properties or perfections, by the Deity ; but whether he will actually so sustain it, can, I apprehend, be known only from his *word* ; which represents the thing, we see, in quite another light : nor indeed ever seems to countenance these nice

‘ As I acknowledge I am one of those persons, who do not believe that the intellectual spirit, or mind of man, is the proper principle of animal life to the body ; but that it is another distinct, conscious being; that generally uses the body as a habitation, engine, or instrument, while its animal life remains ; so I am of opinion, it is a possible thing for the intellectual spirit, in a miraculous manner, by the special order of God, to act in a state of separation, without the death of the animal body ; since the life of the body depends upon breath and air, and the regular temper of the solids and fluids, of which it is composed. And St. Paul, seems to be of the same mind, by his doubting, whether his spirit was in the body, or out of the body, while it was rapt into the third Heaven, and enjoyed that vision ; his body being yet alive. *2 Cor. xii. 2, 3.*’ Elay toward a proof of the separate state of Souls. *Watts’s Works*, Vol. I. p. 521. As we have here a living body, while the soul is separated from it ; so p. 343. we find separate souls supposed to be in the same state of immemorial consciousness [or thought without remembrance] as the soul is while the body is in the deepest sleep ; *i. e.* so far as relates to us,—to all ends and purposes of personality ; and for aught we either do, or ever can know, in no state of consciousness at all.

nice speculations, by treating of *man* in any such intricate, abstracted way. Let those, who esteem it their great wisdom so to do, *go and learn what that meaneth*, which our blessed Saviour says, in answer to a subtle query of the same kind : *Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.* Matt. xxii. 29. Mark. xiii. 24, 27.

Give me leave to subjoin the sentiments of a very pious, worthy person, eminently well versed in the Scripture-language ; I mean the late Rev. Dr. Taylor, whom I consulted on this head, and who returned the following answer : ‘ I have perused your papers upon an important subject, which wants to be cleared up ; and which cannot well be crowded within the narrow limits of a note ; but richly deserves to be expatiated upon in a distinct treatise.—They comprehend two points, one relative to the *nature of the human soul, or spirit* ; so far as revelation gives us any light ; the other, concerning that *state to which death reduces us*. From the collection of Scriptures under the first of these points, I think it appears, that no man can prove from Scripture, that the human soul is a principle, which lives, and acts, or thinks independent of the body.—As to the other, the question is, Do the souls of men, when they die, immediately enter either upon a state of glory in Heaven, or upon a state of misery in the place of torments ; and continue conscious, thinking, enjoying, or suffering, in the one or the other state, till

the resurrection? Or do they remain dead, without thought, life, or consciousness, till the resurrection? Revelation alone can give an answer to these queries: For whatever the metaphysical nature, essence, or substance of the soul be; which is altogether unknown to us: it is demonstratively certain, that its existence, both in the manner and duration of it, must be wholly dependent upon the will and pleasure of God. God must appoint its connection with, and dependence upon any other substance; both in its operations, powers, and duration. All arguments, therefore, for the natural immortality of the soul, taken from the *nature* of its substance or essence; as if it must exist and act separate from the body, because it is of such a substance, &c. are manifestly vain. If indeed we do find any thing in the faculties and operations of the mind, to which we are conscious, that doth shew, it is the *will of God* that we should exist in a future state; those arguments will stand good. But we can never prove, that the soul of man is of such a nature, that it can and must exist, and live, think, act, enjoy, &c. separate from, and independent of, the body. All our present experience shews the contrary. The operations of the mind depend, constantly and invariably, upon the state of the body; of the brain in particular. If some dying persons have a lively use of their rational faculties to the very last: it is because death has invaded some other part; and the brain remains found,

sound, and vigorous.—But what is the sense of revelation? You have given a noble collection of texts, which shew it very clearly.—The subject yields many practical remarks; and the warmest, and strongest excitations to piety.'

But it might look like begging the question, should we draw out all these in form; together with the consequences of this doctrine, in regard to either *papist* or *deist*; till the doctrine itself, which has been so long decryed by the one, and so frequently disgraced by the other, shall appear free from the various prejudices that attend it; and be at last understood to have a fair foundation in the *scriptures*, by which we *protestants* profess to be determined; and when we have duly examined them, may possibly discern, that the *natural immortality* of the human mind, is neither necessarily connected with, nor to a Christian, any proper proof of, a *future state* of rewards and punishments.

I shall conclude with a testimony, which the above mentioned truly candid and conscientious writer bears to his adversary, in this point. *Remarks, annexed to the Scr. Doctr. of Or. S.* p. 5. 'I think he is perfectly just in affirming, that the death threatned to *Adam*, was a total forfeiture and extinction of life; and that our present life, and the resurrection from the dead, is owing to the grace of God, in a Redeemer: for this he has good evidence in Scripture; and honestly deserves the public thanks
of

of the Christian world, for asserting it. For the removal of error, whatever our prejudices may suggest, is so far from being hurtful, that it is of great service to religion.' To the same purpose are *Alexander's* very just Observations on 1 Cor. xv. p. 41, &c.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE these few hints upon the present subject, have produced a controversy, which may probably be carried a good deal farther; though from what has been advanced on the other side, I have found no reason to make any considerable alterations in the foregoing Discourse, and Appendix; it might perhaps be now no improper time to set some of the *consequences* of this and the opposite doctrine in a fuller light; in order to bring the true state of the question into view, and thereby at length remove some of those heavy prejudices, which used to lie against it. But as this seems to be done sufficiently in a short account, which I published in the *Monthly Review* for June 1757, I shall take the liberty to insert the conclusion of that paper, and refer the reader to the rest.

As to the *consequences* of the present question, about which some well-meaning people seem to have mighty apprehensions; it appears that on the one side, there is nothing more than a temporary cessation of thought; which can hurt no body, except the self-interested *papist*; whose very gainful system is indeed, by this means, most effectually overturned; or the
self-

self-sufficient *deist*, whose high claim to an inherent principle of immortality, set up for him, as we have seen, by some mis-judging Christians to their own loss ; is shewn to be no less vain, and groundless.

But on the other side ; there is a manifest derogation from, if not a total subversion of, that positive covenant, which professes solely to entitle us to *everlasting life*. All proper and consistent notions of death, a resurrection, and future judgment, are confounded ; in fine, all the great sanctions and solemn promises of the Gospel, rendered unintelligible, or useless. These, and a thousand other difficulties we bring on ourselves, in order to introduce a new scene of existence ; which, as it was of our own invention, we might dress up as we pleased ; yet have been somewhat unhappy in the decoration. For when we are raising a foundation for it, by our reasonings on the exalted powers of a refined, immaterial principle, in abstract ; we make that much more pure and perfect, than can be conceived in any embodied state, yet all the while imagine it to be in some sort of body, and of a certain shape ; and furnish it with a suitably refined, vehicle, for its *shekinah*, or habitation.

But alas ! when we review this sublime, airy mansion, and begin to compare it with the Scripture-account of the dead ; it sinks again into some subterranean *limbus*, pit, or prison ; we are forced to reduce it all to a state of existence so extremely low and imperfect, that it lies in the very next line to non-existence ;

existence; a middle state between something and nothing; and to all valuable purposes, so wholly insignificant; as to leave every one just in the same situation in which it found him; with regard to any kind of moral use, or spiritual improvement whatsoever. If this then be the case with the present system, and it cost so much to establish it;—if, for the sake of supporting such an idle, incoherent scheme, we have been giving up the peculiar benefit, and some of the principal parts of Christianity:—if we have complimented natural religion with all the discoveries, and all the privileges, that belong to revelation; it is no wonder that the warm contenders for the former of these institutions, have so indifferent an opinion of, and are so unconcerned about, the latter;—and that we have gained so little ground upon them in our late defences. If this, I say, be the case, it is surely right to look about us, and see whether things cannot be put upon some better foot. If we have hurt our own cause, and corrupted Christianity, by an impure mixture of human *swifdom*, falsely so called; or by the dregs of heathen *philosophy*,—designed perhaps to enliven and exalt, but always tending to debase and poison it (M);—if we have

(M) Thus, for instance, when we lost sight of the original, obvious meaning of the word *Death*, as implying a cessation of all natural life, or being a real dissolution and destruction of the whole man; to make something of his sentence, adequate, as we imagine, to the solemnity with which it was denounced, we were obliged to turn this into a *moral Death*, or vicious depravation of his noblest part,

have disguised the face of it, or rather substituted something else in its room ; and thereby put arms into the hands of infidels, which they have used but too successfully against us ;—if this be so ; I ask, whether it is not high time to examine our Bibles ; and try to exhibit the true Christian plan, as it is there delivered,—and *abide by it?*—to consider, whether we may not safely trust it to its own original basis ; without any of those rotten props and clumsy buttresses,

which

part, the soul ; an inherent principle of corruption, derived in the grossest sense, *ex traduce*, whereby even little children (whom our benevolent Lord blesses, and whose amiable innocence he proposes as a proper temper for all the members of his kingdom, *Mark x. 14. 16.*) become objects of God's wrath, and liable to eternal torments, for no other fault except that of being born.

It may likewise merit consideration, whether our keeping in view the proper sense of the *first* Death denounced in general to the race of *Adam*, may not direct us to the true import of that *second* Death which is threatened to all hardened and incorrigible sinners, after some temporal punishment, [*Matt. xi. 24. Luke xii. 47.*] to be inflicted everlastingly *in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone*. *Rev. xxi. 8.* or as our blessed Saviour has repeatedly expressed the same thing, *in hell, and the fire that never shall be quenched*. *Mark ix. 43, 46, 48.* Where it is remarkable, that he adheres invariably to the last words of *Isaiah* describing the fate of all such adversaries to God, upon their final overthrow ; and which perhaps may be tolerably understood by the annexed interpretation. *And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me ; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.*

The prophet evidently alludes to the common custom of conquerors ; who, having gained a decisive battle and driven the enemy out of the field, go forth to view the slain ; whose dead bodies shall, according to the two different ways of disposing them, either be *interred*, and so eaten up with worms, which continue preying on them while there is any thing to devour ; or *burned* in a fire, that ceases not till they be utterly consumed, and reduced to ashes ; and thereby become a lasting monument of Divine Justice, and a warning to the rest of the world.

which after-ages have been building up for its support? Whether we may not securely rest upon that solid rock of a *resurrection*, without any of those visionary prospects, which imagination is ever apt to furnish us with; but which will ever fail us on a thorough trial?

—Whether this *shield of faith*, is not sufficient to protect us; and if relied on, would not make our posture of defence more easy, and commodious? Nay, whether, by this means, we might not be able to remove the seat of war into the enemy's quarters?—drive the adversary out of all those holds, which we have so long yielded to him; and from whence he has ever since annoyed us;—strip him of all that armour, in which he now boasts; and plunge him into that abyss of darkness and despair, out of which the feeble forces of his own frail reason cannot rescue him;—nor any prospect of relief be found, till, conscious of his natural weakness and mortality, he becomes convinced of the want of some supernatural strength, to support him under all the doubts, and terrors incident to it; till at length he sees the necessity for some superior guide, (as every serious, theist soon must,) to conduct him through this gloomy shade of death; and set himself in good earnest, (as it is hoped all such will) to seek after that light which came down from above; and which alone can lead him to the *light of everlasting life*.

Some part of the same Author's apology published in
the

the *Monthly Review* for May 1760, when he took leave of this subject, may perhaps not unseasonably be here repeated, and serve for a conclusion of the whole. When he ventured to revive this dreaded Doctrine, and attempted to rescue it from some of the ugly consequences usually ascribed to it, he was induced to offer such hints, both from Scripture and Reason, as might enable those that were disposed to view the Subject with impartiality, in either light, to come at a fair decision: And accordingly, he receiv'd a very candid letter in print, on that occasion, from a worthy Clergyman; the Rev. Mr. *Bristed*, which convinc'd him, that this and all points of the same kind, if treated in the like calm and dispassionate way, might soon be brought to a satisfactory conclusion, without endangering the public peace, and that all such authors as differ'd in their interpreting some parts of scripture, might nevertheless unite in the genuine spirit of it, by bearing with and assisting one another in love. But if in this case, he has judg'd wrong of the general disposition of the public, who may still be of opinion, that some prudential reasons render it improper for any such questions to be agitated at this day, he readily submits to better judgments, nor would affect to appear singular, or be thought wiser than his superiors. He is very far from being contentious; yet has an ardent desire of doing some service to the Cause of Christianity in this day of distress, when it is closely attacked on all sides, but ever

ever with most success through that impure mixture of human doctrines and heathen traditions, by which it appears to have been long disguised and grievously defiled : and he cannot but esteem it his duty to promote and encourage every modest enquiry, how far this may be really the case, and what may prove the most effectual method to relieve it. He hopes to be excused for dwelling so largely on these two capital points, our Fall in the first, and our Recovery by the second *Adam* ; together with that account of our frame and destination, which he conceives to have a just foundation in the Scriptures, and to be of consequence in explaining the true use and import of Christianity, as there delivered ; and how far he has succeeded in this endeavour, he now leaves to the public judgement, without more debate ; being not very eager of obtruding his sentiments, where they are observed with reluctance ; or fond of forcing his way through a crowd of adversaries ; or pleased with continuing in a situation like that of the *Jews* under *Nebemiah*, obliged to *work with one hand* in the rubbish, and *with the other to hold a weapon*.

He had such a favourable opinion of the present times, as to make some trial of their disposition ; and was tempted to rely upon that *liberty of prophesying*, which appears to be wisely indulged by our Governors, to their own honour, and the common benefit ; and which has remarkably accelerated the progress of religious as well as all other knowledge in

this, above any former age : but if he has mistaken either their Temper, or his own Talents, which is very possible ; presuming too much on appearances, and pushing matters beyond what even the present times, greatly improved as they most certainly are within our memory, will bear : if he has deviated too far from the common road, so as to have given unnecessary offence to those that are otherwise minded ; such will find him willing to make all the reparation in his power, by assuring them that they may rest secure as to him, from any more disturbance of this kind ; since he is equally unwilling, to rob any good men of the satisfaction they enjoy in popular opinions, as to expose himself to popular odium by persisting farther in drawing the Saw of contention upon this or any other point of unavailing controversy. Comp. S. Bourn's Advertisement prefixed to his Discourses in 2 Vols. with Serm. x, xi, &c. and the late excellent piece, entitled, *A short historical View of the Controversy*. 2d Ed. or, *A warning against Popish Doctrines*, 1767, or Dr. Priestly's Institutes, v. 3. Pt. 3. Sect. 4.

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F I N I S.

Z. E. G. N. I.

...-6000 ft. of sandstone, dolomite, and shale, with thin
clayey layers. The dolomites contain large amounts of
iron pyrite, which gives them a blackish-green color.
The dolomites are interbedded with thin layers of
shale and sandstone. The dolomites are highly
metamorphosed, showing evidence of pressure and
temperature.

Während der Arbeit an dem ersten Bande des "Handbuchs der
Technischen Mechanik" habe ich mich darüber beschäftigt,



E R R A T A.

Page 49, note,	*	for 262,	read 277
71	—	†	— 208 — 219
101	—	t	— 87 — 92
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- ✓ Page 32, line 5 in the notes, for *Calm's Travels* read *Kalm's*.
- ✓ Page 38, line 17, for *of* read *off*.
- ✓ Page 38, line 2 from the bottom, after *we* read *who*.
- Page 49, line 3, dele *taken*.
- Page 53, line 3 from the bottom, after *expiation* read *which*.
- Page 60, note, line 9 from the bottom, for *old* read *odd*.
- ✓ Page 79, line 10 of the note, read *injustitiam*.

Page 98 line 8, read all over the world.

Page 121. note l. r. for 42 ^Ar. 43.

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Q12	802	—	†	—	17
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Q14	802	—	*	—	812



